



Search for single production of a vector-like quark via a heavy gluon in the $4b$ final state with the ATLAS detector in pp collisions at $\sqrt{s} = 8$ TeV



ATLAS Collaboration*

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ABSTRACT

A search is performed for the process $pp \rightarrow G^* \rightarrow B_H \bar{b}/\bar{B}_H b \rightarrow H b \bar{b} \rightarrow b \bar{b} b \bar{b}$, predicted in composite Higgs scenarios, where G^* is a heavy colour octet vector resonance and B_H a vector-like quark of charge $-1/3$. The data were obtained from pp collisions at a centre-of-mass energy of 8 TeV corresponding to an integrated luminosity of 19.5 fb^{-1} , recorded by the ATLAS detector at the LHC. The largest background, multijet production, is estimated using a data-driven method. No significant excess of events with respect to Standard Model predictions is observed, and upper limits on the production cross section times branching ratio are set. Comparisons to the predictions from a specific benchmark model are made, resulting in lower mass limits in the two-dimensional mass plane of m_{G^*} vs. m_{B_H} .

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1. Introduction

Composite Higgs [1–4] models interpret the Higgs boson discovered at the Large Hadron Collider (LHC) [5] as a pseudo-Goldstone boson resulting from spontaneous symmetry breaking in a new strongly coupled sector, thus addressing the naturalness problem, the extreme fine tuning required in the Standard Model (SM) to cancel quadratically divergent radiative corrections to the Higgs boson mass. A generic prediction of these models is the existence of massive vector-like quarks (VLQ). These VLQs are expected to mix mainly with the third family of quarks of the SM [6–8], leading to partial compositeness. Colour octet resonances (massive gluons) also occur naturally in these models [6,7,9,10].

Searches for vector-like quarks in the ATLAS and CMS experiments, in both the pair and single production processes [11–22], constrain their mass to be above 700–900 GeV. This analysis is a search for single production of a vector-like quark B_H of charge $-1/3$ via the s -channel exchange of a heavy colour octet vector resonance G^* , using data recorded by the ATLAS detector at the LHC. The search is performed for the process of $H b \bar{b}$ production through $pp \rightarrow G^* \rightarrow B_H \bar{b}/\bar{B}_H b \rightarrow H b \bar{b} \rightarrow b \bar{b} b \bar{b}$ (see Fig. 1),¹ based on Ref. [23] and using the benchmark model of Ref. [9]. This simplified minimal composite Higgs model has a composite sector with a global $SU(3)_c \times SU(2)_L \times SU(2)_R \times U(1)_Y$ symmetry and an elementary sector which contains the SM particles but

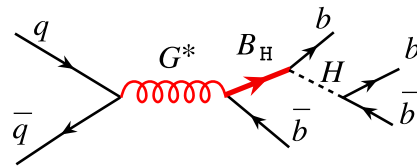


Fig. 1. Feynman diagram of the signal process $q\bar{q} \rightarrow G^* \rightarrow B_H \bar{b} \rightarrow H b \bar{b} \rightarrow b \bar{b} b \bar{b}$.

not the Higgs boson. Physical states of the composite sector include the heavy gluon G^* , a composite Higgs boson and heavy vector-like quarks of charge $5/3$, $2/3$, $-1/3$ and $-4/3$. Among these heavy quarks, there is one singlet of charge $2/3$ which mixes with the right-handed top quark of the SM with an angle θ_{tR} , and similarly one singlet of charge $-1/3$ which mixes with the right-handed bottom quark of the SM with an angle θ_{bR} . After mixing between the gluons from the elementary and composite sectors by an angle θ_s , the physical state of the heavy gluon has a coupling $g_c \cos \theta_s$ to composite states, where $g_c = g_s / \sin \theta_s$ and g_s is the coupling of the SM gluon. The other parameters of the model are the composite fermion masses, assumed to be universal, the heavy gluon mass m_{G^*} and two Yukawa couplings Y_T and Y_B . In a large part of the parameter space, the lightest of the new heavy quarks is B_H , of charge $-1/3$, and in this model it decays exclusively to $H b$. In Ref. [23], the condition $m_{B_H} = m_{G^*}/2$ is applied, with the result that pair production of the heavy partners is kinematically forbidden and the width of G^* is consequently not too large. In the search presented here, the phase space is extended to $m_{B_H} \geq m_{G^*}/2$. When $m_{B_H} < m_{G^*}/2$, present results on pair produc-

* E-mail address: atlas.publications@cern.ch.

¹ Charge conjugate states are implied in the following text.

tion of vector-like quarks can be recast in a model with a massive colour octet [24].

For high masses of the G^* and B_H resonances, the Higgs boson is highly boosted and the decay products are reconstructed in a single large-radius (large- R) jet in the detector, whereas for lower masses the four b -quarks are reconstructed as separate small-radius jets. The analysis uses two sets of selection criteria to target these two cases.

2. The ATLAS detector

The ATLAS detector,² located at the LHC, is described in detail in Ref. [25]. It covers nearly the full solid angle around the collision point. The inner detector is surrounded by a solenoid that produces a 2 T axial magnetic field. The tracks of charged particles are reconstructed with a high-granularity silicon pixel and microstrip detector for $|\eta| < 2.5$. A straw-tube transition radiation detector extends the tracking to larger radii and provides electron/pion discrimination. The electromagnetic calorimeter consists of a barrel and end-cap lead/liquid-argon (LAr) sections with an accordion geometry covering $|\eta| < 3.2$, preceded by a thin presampler, covering $|\eta| < 1.8$, which allows corrections for fluctuations in upstream energy losses. A copper/LAr electromagnetic calorimeter covers the very forward angles. Hadronic calorimetry is installed in the barrel region, $|\eta| < 1.7$, using steel as the absorber and scintillator tiles as the active material. In the endcaps, copper/LAr calorimeters cover $1.5 < |\eta| < 3.2$ followed by a forward calorimeter based on tungsten absorbers in LAr as sensitive medium, up to $|\eta| = 4.9$. Surrounding the hadronic calorimeters are large toroidal magnets whose magnetic fields deflect the trajectories of charged particles exiting the barrel and end-cap calorimeters. The muon spectrometer uses monitored drift tubes for tracking in $|\eta| < 2.7$ with cathode strip chambers in the innermost station for $|\eta| > 2.0$. A dedicated muon trigger is provided by resistive plate chambers in the barrel and thin-gap chambers in the end-cap, covering $|\eta| < 2.4$.

A three-level trigger system, consisting of a hardware Level-1 trigger and two software-based trigger levels reduce the event rate to be recorded to less than about 400 Hz.

3. Data and simulation

Data used in this analysis correspond to an integrated luminosity of 19.5 fb^{-1} of pp collisions collected at the LHC at a centre-of-mass energy of $\sqrt{s} = 8 \text{ TeV}$, with all the essential elements of the ATLAS detector fully operational and stable.

Simulated signal and background samples are produced by Monte Carlo (MC) event generators and passed through a GEANT4 [26] simulation of the ATLAS detector [27]. Additional events from the same and neighbouring bunch crossings (pile-up) are included by adding simulated diffractive and non-diffractive pp collisions to hard-scattering events. The pile-up rate is reweighted in accordance with the luminosity profile of the recorded data. All simulated events are then reconstructed using the same reconstruction software as the data.

Signal samples based on the model discussed in Ref. [23] are generated with MADGRAPH5_aMC@NLO [28], using CTEQ6L1 [29]

parton distribution functions (PDFs), in the mass region $m_{G^*}/2 \leq m_{B_H} < m_{G^*}$, with $1 \text{ TeV} < m_{G^*} < 3 \text{ TeV}$, in steps of 250 GeV in m_{G^*} and in steps of 125 GeV in m_{B_H} . The Higgs boson mass is set to 126 GeV and its branching ratio $\text{BR}(H \rightarrow b\bar{b})$ to 56.1% [30]. The parameters of the model are set as in Ref. [23]: $g_c = 3$, $Y_T = Y_B = 3$, $\sin \theta_{\text{tr}} = \sin \theta_{b_R} = 0.6$.

The event selection requires at least two b -jets in the final state. Multijet events from strong interactions have a large cross section and are the dominant background. Due to the large number of events required to simulate this background and the difficulty of modelling it accurately, it is evaluated using a data-driven method, as described in Section 6. Other background contributions include top-pair and single-top-quark production, generated with POWHEG-Box [31–33] interfaced to PYTHIA [34] using CT10 PDFs [35]. The $t\bar{t}$ sample is normalised to the theoretical calculation performed at next-to-next-to-leading order (NNLO) including resummation of next-to-next-to-leading logarithmic (NNLL) soft gluon terms with Top++2.0 [36,37], giving an inclusive cross section of $253^{+13}_{-15} \text{ pb}$ [38]. Samples of $t\bar{t} + Z$ and $t\bar{t} + H$ events are generated with PYTHIA and CTEQ6L1 PDFs. The SHERPA [39] generator, with CT10 PDFs, is used to simulate W/Z + jets samples with leptonic decay of the vector bosons. SHERPA is also used to generate Z + jets events, with $Z \rightarrow b\bar{b}$, where the extra jets are produced inclusively. Contributions from diboson backgrounds— WW , WZ and ZZ —are estimated to be negligible.

4. Object reconstruction

The final state consists of four jets from b -quarks (b -jets), two of which come from the Higgs boson decay. If the Higgs boson is sufficiently boosted, having a transverse momentum $p_T \gtrsim 300 \text{ GeV}$, the two b -jets may be merged into a single jet with a large radius parameter (large- R jet) and therefore two different jet definitions are used.

Jets with smaller radius parameter, or small- R jets, are reconstructed from calibrated calorimeter energy clusters [40,41] using the anti- k_t algorithm [42] with a distance parameter $R = 0.4$. The high p_T threshold used in the event selection ensures that the contamination of jets from pile-up is small. To ensure high-quality reconstruction of central jets while rejecting most jets not coming from hard-scattering events, criteria as described in Ref. [43] are applied. Jets are corrected for pile-up by a jet-area subtraction method and calibrated by a jet energy scale factor [44]. They are required to have $p_T > 50 \text{ GeV}$ and $|\eta| < 2.5$.

Small- R jets are identified as containing a b -hadron (b -tagged) by a multivariate algorithm [45]. This algorithm was configured to give a b -tagging efficiency of 70% in simulated $t\bar{t}$ events, with a mistag probability of about 1% for gluon and light-quark jets and of about 20% for c -quark-initiated jets. The b -tagging efficiency in simulated events is corrected to account for differences observed between data and simulation.

Large- R jets are reconstructed using the anti- k_t algorithm with $R = 1.0$. Jet trimming [46,47] is applied to reduce the contamination from pile-up and underlying-event activity: subjects are formed using the k_t algorithm [48] with $R = 0.3$ and subjects with $p_T(\text{subject})/p_T(\text{jet}) < 5\%$ are removed.

Leptons are vetoed in this analysis to reduce background involving leptonically decaying vector bosons. Electron candidates with $p_T > 7 \text{ GeV}$ are identified in the range $|\eta| < 2.47$ from energy clusters in the electromagnetic calorimeter, matched to a track in the inner detector. Requirements of ‘medium’ quality, as defined in Ref. [49], are applied together with two isolation criteria: the scalar sum of the transverse momentum (energy) within a radius $\Delta R = 0.2$ around the electron candidate has to be less than

² ATLAS experiment uses a right-handed coordinate system with its origin at the nominal interaction point in the centre of the detector and the z -axis along the beam pipe. The x -axis points from the IP to the centre of the LHC ring, and the y -axis points upward. Cylindrical coordinates (r, ϕ) are used in the transverse plane, ϕ being the azimuthal angle around the z -axis. The pseudorapidity is defined in terms of the polar angle θ as $\eta = -\ln \tan(\theta/2)$. The distance in η - ϕ space is referred to as $\Delta R = \sqrt{(\Delta\eta)^2 + (\Delta\phi)^2}$.

Table 1

Signal region definitions: category 1 (2) refers to the case where the next-to-leading- p_T (leading- p_T) jet not associated with the Higgs boson is assumed to be from the B_H decay.

	Category 1		Category 2		
	SR1	SR2	SR3	SR4	SR5
Lower cut on reconstructed m_{G^*} and m_{B_H} [TeV]	(1.0, 0.5)	(1.3, 0.5)	(0.8, 0.5)	(1.5, 0.5)	(1.8, 1.0)

15% (14%) of the electron $p_T(E_T)$. Muons with $p_T > 7$ GeV and $|\eta| < 2.4$ are reconstructed from matched tracks in the muon spectrometer and the inner detector. Quality criteria are applied, as described in Ref. [50], and an isolation requirement is applied: the scalar sum of the transverse momentum of tracks within a radius $\Delta R = 0.2$ around the muon candidate has to be less than 10% of the muon p_T .

5. Event selection

Because of the very high hadronic background at the LHC, it is not possible to have adequate Monte Carlo statistics for multi-jet events. The uncertainties in the quality of simulation of b -jets at high- p_T can also be large. For these reasons, for each mass pair (m_{G^*}, m_{B_H}) being tested, a data-driven technique was used to evaluate the expected background, as described in Section 6. The technique requires that we define control regions orthogonal to the signal regions. A blind analysis is performed, in which the background is first evaluated without initial knowledge of the data in the signal regions. In order to test the large number of mass pair hypotheses, all signal region cuts are applied except the Higgs mass window which is blinded when evaluating the background in the signal regions.

5.1. Event preselection

Events in the signal region are first preselected according to the following criteria (see end of Section 5.2 for the signal region definition).

- They must satisfy a combination of six triggers requiring multiple jets and b -jets for various p_T thresholds, where b -jets are identified by a dedicated online b -tagging algorithm. This combination of triggers is $> 99\%$ efficient for signal events passing the offline selection, across the B_H and G^* mass ranges considered in this analysis.
- They are vetoed if they contain reconstructed isolated leptons (e or μ) in order to reduce the contribution from W/Z + jets and $t\bar{t}$ backgrounds.
- At least three small- R b -tagged jets must be present in the signal region.
- The invariant mass of the system composed of all selected $R = 0.4$ jets is required to be greater than 600 GeV.

Two event topologies are considered for the signal, depending on the boost of the Higgs boson. Highly boosted Higgs bosons are reconstructed using large- R jets as described in Section 4 and this topology corresponds to the merged scenario (see Section 5.2). If no large- R jet is found, an attempt is made to reconstruct the Higgs boson from two small- R jets (see Section 5.3). The acceptance times reconstruction efficiency for the combined yields of the two topologies varies from 5% to 20% depending on the masses of the G^* and B_H .

5.2. Merged selection

The signal region for the merged case consists of the following requirements.

- A large- R jet must be present with $p_T > 300$ GeV and $|\eta| < 2.0$ and mass in the range [90, 140] GeV. The mass window was optimised based on the signal sensitivity. If more than one such large- R jet is present, the Higgs candidate is chosen to be the one with mass closest to 126 GeV. At least one b -tagged jet must be matched to it within a distance $\Delta R = 1.0$.
- There must be at least two additional b -tagged jets separated from the Higgs boson candidate, $\Delta R(H, j) > 1.4$. The two with the highest p_T are used to reconstruct the G^* and B_H candidates.

Once the Higgs boson candidate has been identified as above, there remains an ambiguity in assigning the other jets to the vector-like quark B_H . The four-momentum of the B_H candidate is reconstructed as the four-momentum sum of the Higgs boson candidate and either the next-to-leading- p_T (category 1) or the leading- p_T (category 2) b -jet away from it, depending on the assumed mass difference between G^* and B_H . For large G^*-B_H mass difference, the B_H and b -quark from G^* splitting have high momentum and therefore the jet from the subsequent B_H decay is likely to be the next-to-leading jet. For a small mass difference the opposite is true since in this latter case the B_H decay products are more boosted than the G^* splitting products. For each (m_{G^*}, m_{B_H}) pair, the category which has the higher probability that the correct pairing is formed is chosen, based on the simulated signal events. Finally, the G^* four-momentum is reconstructed as the four-momentum sum of the Higgs boson jet and the two leading- p_T b -jets not matched to the Higgs boson candidate.

Different signal regions are defined for the different (m_{G^*}, m_{B_H}) mass pair hypotheses. They are characterised by the choice of category defined above as well as by lower cuts on the reconstructed masses of G^* and B_H candidates. Five inclusive signal regions were defined, with the minimum mass of the G^* candidate ranging from 0.8 to 1.8 TeV and of the B_H candidate from 0.5 to 1 TeV; these are shown in Table 1. No upper cut on the resonance masses was set since the multijet background distribution falls rapidly and the resonance widths become larger for high masses. For each mass pair considered, the signal region that gives the maximum signal sensitivity, the ratio of the expected number of signal events to the square root of the number of background events, is chosen.

5.3. Resolved selection

Events in the resolved signal region are required to satisfy the following criteria.

- In order to be able to later combine the results with the merged channel, events are required to fail the merged selection criteria.
- Events are required to have exactly four small- R jets with $p_T > 50$ GeV and $|\eta| < 2.5$, with at least three of these jets being b -tagged. The Higgs boson candidate is reconstructed using the two jets with invariant mass nearest to 126 GeV. The invariant mass is required to be in the interval [90, 140] GeV and the transverse momentum of the dijet system $p_T(jj) > 200$ GeV.

The four-momentum of the B_H candidate is reconstructed from the four-momentum sum of the Higgs candidate and either the

leading or the next-to-leading- p_T jet away from the Higgs boson jets, depending on the G^*-B_H mass splitting. As in the merged case, for each pair of masses considered the category is chosen to be the one with the lower mis-assignment rate of jets, based on samples of simulated signal events. Inclusive signal regions are defined by lower minimum mass values identical to the merged case, and shown in Table 1. Each mass pair is assigned to the same SR for the merged and resolved analysis. The four-momentum of the G^* candidate is reconstructed from the four-momentum sum of the four jets in the event.

6. Modelling of the multijet background

The ‘ABCD’ data-driven method is used to estimate the multijet background. For each of the ten signal regions, three control regions orthogonal to the signal region are defined: region B has all the signal region selection criteria mentioned in Section 5 applied, including the lepton vetoes and lower cuts on the masses of B_H and G^* candidates, but the Higgs boson candidate mass is required to be outside the interval [90, 140] GeV; region C has all the signal region selection requirements, but requires exactly two jets to be b -tagged; and region D has the Higgs boson candidate outside the Higgs boson mass window and exactly two b -tagged jets. In regions C and D, only one of the two jets not associated with the Higgs boson candidate is b -tagged. The number of multi-

jet (MJ) events expected in the signal region (SR) is then evaluated according to

$$N_{\text{SR}}^{\text{MJ}} = N_{\text{B}}/N_{\text{D}} \times N_{\text{C}}, \quad (1)$$

where N_X is the number of events in region X, after having removed the top-quark, diboson and other electroweak background contributions as determined from MC simulations.

This estimate assumes that no bias results from the choice of control regions. To evaluate and potentially correct for the effect of any biases, a re-weighting is performed on two kinematic distributions, the leading-jet p_T and the ΔR between the reconstructed Higgs boson candidate and the leading jet not associated with it. Control regions C and D (B and D) are re-weighted, using a method similar to Ref. [51], to have the same shape as in control region B (C) with weights obtained from $N_{\text{B}}/N_{\text{D}}$ ($N_{\text{B}}/N_{\text{D}}$) per bin. The effect of this re-weighting is found to be negligible and therefore no correction is applied.

A validation region is defined as the 15 GeV sideband regions outside the Higgs boson candidate mass window, i.e. 75–90 GeV and 140–155 GeV, for each signal region. The contribution from multijet background is estimated as above, but with the control regions B and D excluding these validation regions and region C now being the two sidebands. It is then compared to the number of observed data events, after adding back the simulation-based background, in these regions. Table 2 shows that the expected and observed numbers of events agree well in the validation regions for the merged- and resolved-channel signal regions.

Table 2

Expected and observed numbers of events in the validation regions (VR) associated to their respected signal regions for the merged and resolved channels. Only the statistical error is shown.

Merged					
	VR1	VR2	VR3	VR4	VR5
Expected	563 ± 16	213 ± 10	1680 ± 29	135 ± 8	45 ± 4
Observed	558	184	1666	137	35
Resolved					
	VR1	VR2	VR3	VR4	VR5
Expected	1065 ± 21	337 ± 11	3758 ± 50	242 ± 10	63 ± 5
Observed	1073	324	3906	238	56

Table 3

Systematic and statistical uncertainties on the total background in each of the signal regions for the merged and resolved analyses. The background estimation uncertainties have been scaled by the ratio of the multijet contribution to the total background estimation in order to get the relative error on the total background.

Merged					
Systematic uncertainty	SR1	SR2	SR3	SR4	SR5
Background estimation	5%	15%	2.8%	10%	27%
$t\bar{t}$ cross section	+1.0% –1.1%	+0.8% –0.9%	+1.2% –1.4%	+0.8% –0.9%	+0.6% –0.7%
JER small-R	+0.29%	+0.15%	+0.01%	–0.32%	+0.20%
JES small-R	+0.9% –0.8%	+1.6% –0.7%	+1.0% –1.0%	+0.9% –1.0%	+1.5% –1.0%
JES/JMS large-R	+0.31% –1.5%	+1.3% –1.5%	+0.13% –1.9%	+0.9% –0.8%	+1.6% –0.20%
b -tagging	+0.18% –0.18%	+0.23% –0.33%	+0.24% –0.18%	<0.01%	+1.6% <0.01%
Luminosity	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.2%	0.2%
Data/MC statistical (CR)	2.2%	4%	1.3%	4%	8%
Total (stat.)	2.7%	5%	1.5%	6%	10%
Total (syst.)	6%	15%	4%	11%	28%
Resolved					
Systematic uncertainty	SR1	SR2	SR3	SR4	SR5
Background estimation	3.5%	6%	4%	8%	16%
$t\bar{t}$ cross section	+0.24% –0.27%	+0.20% –0.23%	+0.31% –0.4%	+0.23% –0.26%	+0.17% –0.20%
JER small-R	+0.17%	+0.32%	+0.18%	–0.37%	–0.5%
JES small-R	+0.8% –0.6%	+0.7% –0.6%	+0.6% –0.7%	+0.8% –0.7%	+1.0% –0.8%
b -tagging	+0.5% –0.4%	+0.5% –0.30%	+0.5% –0.4%	+0.4% –0.4%	+0.7% –0.7%
Luminosity	0.13%	0.13%	0.15%	0.15%	0.11%
Data/MC statistical (CR)	1.6%	2.7%	1.0%	3.3%	6%
Total (stat.)	2.1%	4%	1.0%	4%	8%
Total (syst.)	4%	7%	4%	8%	17%

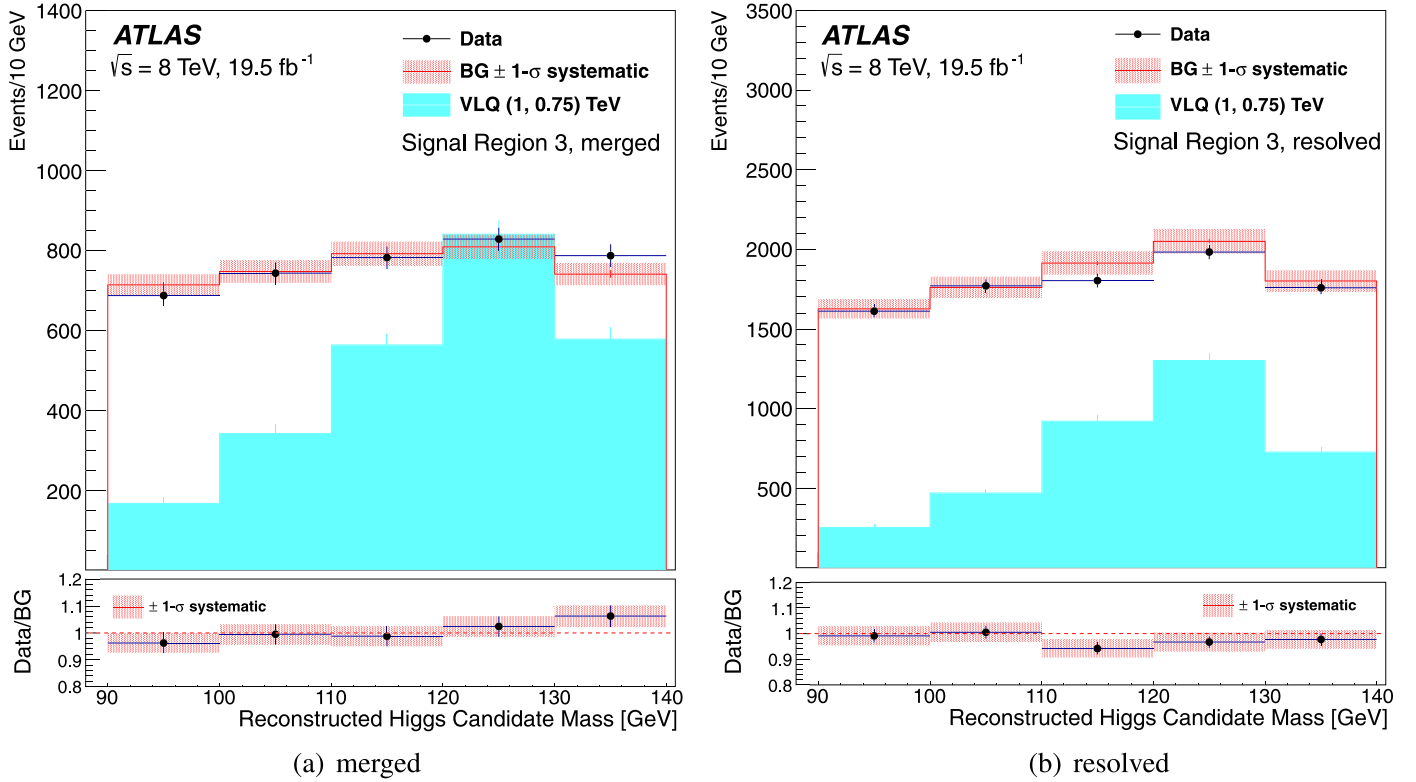


Fig. 2. Observed (black points) and expected (red band) distribution of the reconstructed Higgs boson candidate mass in signal region 3 for the (a) merged and (b) resolved cases. The normalisation of region C is applied as an overall factor, and not bin-by-bin, for the Higgs boson candidate mass window. The red error bands represent the systematic uncertainty on the expected background. The distribution from a signal with $m_{G^*} = 1$ TeV and $m_{BH} = 0.75$ TeV is also shown for the parameters listed in Section 3. The lower panels show the ratio of the observed number of events in data to the expected background. (For interpretation of the references to colour in this figure legend, the reader is referred to the web version of this article.)

region, if the observed number of events is compatible with the estimated number within one standard deviation (calculated as the sum in quadrature of the relative statistical errors of the two), this standard deviation is considered to be the background estimation uncertainty. Otherwise, the background uncertainty is considered to be the fractional difference between the observed and estimated numbers of events. This is the largest uncertainty, ranging from 5% in SR1 to 27% in SR5 for the merged case, and from 3.5% in SR1 to 16% in SR5 for the resolved case.

The $t\bar{t}$ contribution dominates the simulation-based background. The theoretical uncertainty on its cross section is taken to be 6%, as discussed in Section 3.

Uncertainties due to the calibration and modelling of the detector affecting the simulation-based background estimates in the control and signal regions are principally due to the jet energy scale (JES) and jet energy resolution (JER). JES uncertainties for small- R jets include contributions from detector reconstruction and from different physics modelling and evaluation methods [52]. Uncertainties leading to a higher (lower) yield than the nominal value are added in quadrature to the total JES up (down) uncertainty. To evaluate the impact of JER for small- R jets, energies of simulated jets are smeared to be consistent with the JER measured in data. The JER systematic uncertainty is the difference between the nominal and smeared values.

JES uncertainties for large- R jets in the central region are evaluated as described in Ref. [47]. The jet mass scale (JMS) uncertainty is 4–5% for $p_T \lesssim 700$ GeV and increases linearly with p_T to about 8% in the range $900 \lesssim p_T \lesssim 1000$ GeV.

The total uncertainty in the measured b -tagging efficiency was evaluated in Ref. [53] and is p_T and η dependent. For high- p_T jets, the systematic uncertainty is derived from simulation. It is esti-

mated here for the simulation-based backgrounds, accounting for the statistical uncertainty, the error on the generator-dependent scale factors, the track momentum scale, resolution and efficiency systematic uncertainties, and the extrapolation uncertainties for light jets. It is at or below the percent level and always dominated by the background estimation.

The predicted signal is not confined to the signal region: it could also constitute a fraction of the observed data in the control regions. The effect of this potential contamination on the statistical procedure is described in Section 8.

Systematic uncertainties due to detector effects also affect the VLQ signal yields. They are dominated by the b -tagging uncertainties, ranging from 16% to 40% depending on p_T , while other sources of systematic uncertainties listed above are below 5%. Theoretical uncertainties in the signal cross section due to the choice of PDFs are estimated from CTEQ6.6 with its 22 eigenvector sets [29].

8. Results

After applying all selection criteria in the signal regions, the multijet background in the Higgs boson candidate mass window is evaluated according to Eq. (1). Mass distributions of reconstructed Higgs boson candidates are shown in Fig. 2 for the merged and resolved cases in SR3. The observed data and the background predictions are consistent within statistical and systematic uncertainties.

For each pair of mass points considered, the expected signal yield, based on the benchmark model, is evaluated in the corresponding signal region. These yields result from the signal $\sigma \times (A \times \epsilon)$, where σ is the cross section including all the branching fractions and $(A \times \epsilon)$ is the acceptance times reconstruction

Table 4

Observed data and background yields in the different signal regions for the merged and resolved cases. The first error is statistical and the second is systematic, while for individual background contributions only the statistical error is shown. Statistical errors on the numbers of data events in the control regions used to estimate the multijet background are included in the total statistical error. The row $t\bar{t}$ /top includes $t\bar{t}$, single-top and $t\bar{t} + V/H$ backgrounds while $W/Z + \text{jets}$ includes leptonic and hadronic decays of the vector boson.

Merged					
Background	SR1	SR2	SR3	SR4	SR5
Multijet	1104 ± 27	398 ± 16	3372 ± 49	259 ± 12	85 ± 7
$t\bar{t}$ /top	107 ± 4	30.0 ± 2.3	398 ± 8	18.3 ± 1.9	4.2 ± 1.0
$W/Z + \text{jets}$	10.5 ± 1.3	4.4 ± 0.9	30.1 ± 1.9	2.6 ± 0.8	0.8 ± 0.5
Total BG	$1222 \pm 33 \pm 70$	$432 \pm 20 \pm 60$	$3800 \pm 60 \pm 150$	$280 \pm 16 \pm 30$	$90 \pm 9 \pm 25$
Data	1310	456	3827	287	89

Resolved					
Background	SR1	SR2	SR3	SR4	SR5
Multijet	1985 ± 34	639 ± 18	8580 ± 90	523 ± 18	141 ± 9
$t\bar{t}$ /top	64.2 ± 3.2	17.7 ± 1.8	353 ± 8	15.4 ± 1.6	3.3 ± 0.7
$W/Z + \text{jets}$	35.0 ± 3.3	12.7 ± 1.8	142 ± 6	12.8 ± 2.2	2.6 ± 0.4
Total BG	$2080 \pm 40 \pm 80$	$669 \pm 25 \pm 50$	$9080 \pm 90 \pm 340$	$551 \pm 23 \pm 50$	$147 \pm 12 \pm 25$
Data	2106	706	8927	568	122

Table 5

Combined limits, in fb, on $\sigma(pp \rightarrow G^* \rightarrow B_H b) \times \text{BR}(B_H \rightarrow Hb) \times \text{BR}(H \rightarrow b\bar{b})$. First and second entries in each cell give the expected and observed limits, respectively. The third entry gives the cross section in fb predicted by the benchmark model. Red cells are excluded and green cells are not excluded at 95% C.L. Cases where $m_{G^*} > 2m_{B_H}$ are not considered in this analysis and are marked in yellow. (For interpretation of the references to colour in this table legend, the reader is referred to the web version of this article.)

m_{B_H} [TeV] ↓									
2.0						62^{+62}_{-22} 68 5.2	62^{+58}_{-24} 62 4.8	61^{+75}_{-23} 64 2.9	71^{+110}_{-29} 74 1.5
1.875									
1.75					72^{+48}_{-22} 74 16	51^{+36}_{-17} 52 13	57^{+52}_{-21} 59 7.8	61^{+72}_{-24} 61 3.8	65^{+82}_{-26} 66 1.7
1.625									
1.50				66^{+42}_{-23} 66 47	57^{+53}_{-19} 61 38	57^{+55}_{-21} 57 21	56^{+69}_{-21} 57 9.6	56^{+47}_{-22} 56 4.3	65^{+68}_{-25} 67 1.9
1.375								66^{+42}_{-23} 66 4.5	
1.25			163^{+104}_{-50} 163 148	66^{+49}_{-22} 67 105	54^{+43}_{-18} 54 54	60^{+58}_{-22} 60 24	42^{+45}_{-15} 43 11		
1.125						68^{+63}_{-23} 70 25			
1.0		157^{+76}_{-52} 152 475	151^{+87}_{-50} 151 291	53^{+37}_{-18} 54 159	58^{+46}_{-19} 58 58				
0.875				84^{+44}_{-26} 85 137					
0.75	232^{+130}_{-73} 232 1449	172^{+90}_{-52} 172 746	59^{+31}_{-19} 59 310						
m_{G^*} [TeV] →	1.0	1.25	1.5	1.75	2.0	2.25	2.50	2.75	3.0

efficiency of the signal selection cuts. The amount of contamination, defined as the expected ratio of the number of signal events in control regions B, C, or D to that in the signal region, is also estimated.

Table 4 shows the expected and observed background event yields in each of the signal regions for the merged and resolved cases. No significant excess of data events is found compared to the expected SM background. Taking into account the number of

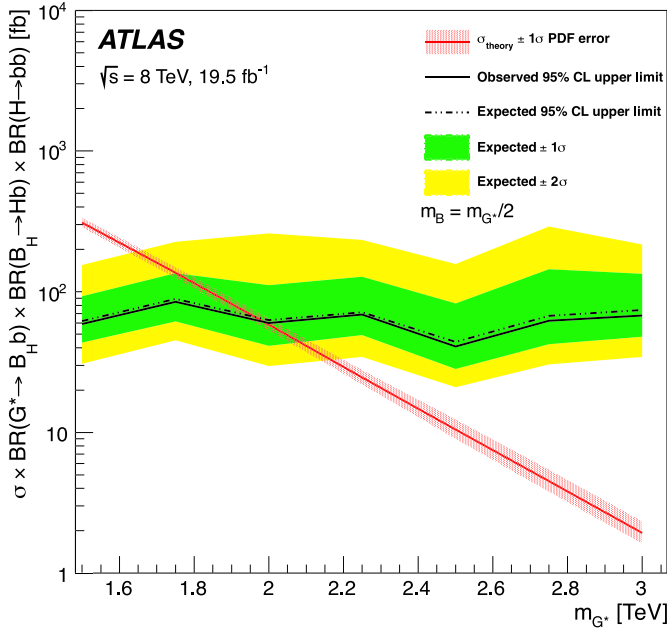


Fig. 3. Observed (solid) and expected (dashed) 95% C.L. upper limits on the cross section $\sigma(pp \rightarrow G^* \rightarrow B_H b) \times \text{BR}(B_H \rightarrow Hb) \times \text{BR}(H \rightarrow b\bar{b})$ for VLQ mass points with $m_{B_H} = m_{G^*}/2$, from the combined merged and resolved analyses, as well as the theoretical prediction based on parameters given in Section 3. The uncertainty band around the theory cross section reflects the uncertainty in the CTEQ6.6 PDFs.

expected background events in each of the signal regions and the yield of signal events for each test mass pair, together with all statistical and systematic uncertainties, upper limits at the 95% confidence level (CL), using the CL_s prescription [54] and RooStats [55], are set on the cross section times the branching fraction of a signal, combining results from the merged and resolved analyses. To account for possible contamination of the control regions by signal, an iterative procedure is used: a 95% CL limit is first obtained assuming no contamination in the control regions. The contamination in regions B, C, D is then calculated, assuming a signal corresponding to that limit, and the multijet background is then re-evaluated. The procedure is repeated until it converges to a stable value. Expected and observed limits on the cross section $\sigma(pp \rightarrow G^* \rightarrow B_H b) \times \text{BR}(B_H \rightarrow Hb) \times \text{BR}(H \rightarrow b\bar{b})$, where $\sigma(pp \rightarrow G^* \rightarrow B_H b)$ represents the cross section of the process $pp \rightarrow G^* \rightarrow B_H b$ and its complex conjugate, as well as the theoretical cross section for the benchmark model, with its theoretical uncertainty, are shown in Table 5. Limits for the particular cases where $m_{B_H} = m_{G^*}/2$ and $m_{B_H} = m_{G^*} - 250$ GeV are shown in Figs. 3 and 4.

9. Conclusion

A search for a heavy gluon and a charge $-1/3$ vector-like quark in the process $pp \rightarrow G^* \rightarrow B_H b$, with $B_H \rightarrow bH$ and $H \rightarrow b\bar{b}$, has been performed using an integrated luminosity of 19.5 fb^{-1} of pp collision data recorded at $\sqrt{s} = 8 \text{ TeV}$ with the ATLAS detector at the LHC. The main background, multijet production, is estimated with a data-driven technique. Five signal regions are defined based on the choice of jet assignment to the B_H candidate and on lower mass requirements for the reconstructed G^* and B_H . No significant excess over the SM predictions is observed and upper limits have been set at the 95% confidence level on the total cross section times branching ratio in the two-dimensional plane of m_{G^*} vs. m_{B_H} with $m_{G^*} \leq 2m_{B_H}$. Using a benchmark model presented in

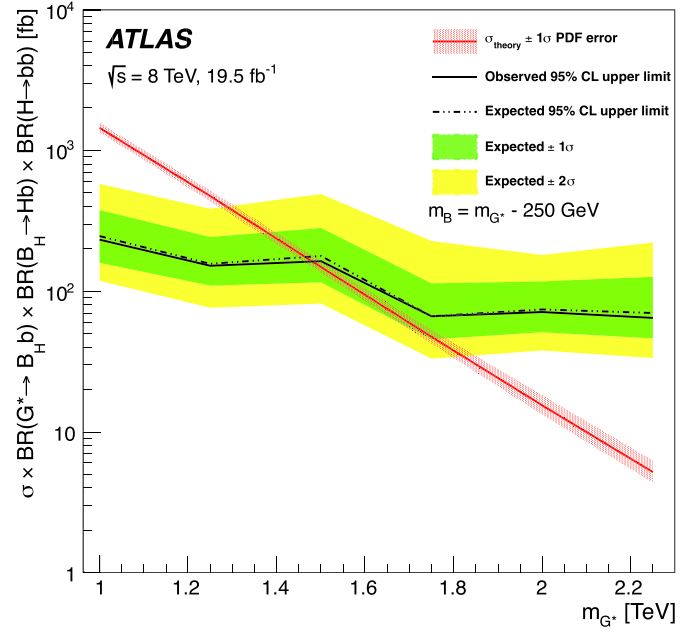


Fig. 4. Observed (solid) and expected (dashed) 95% C.L. upper limits on the cross section $\sigma(pp \rightarrow G^* \rightarrow B_H b) \times \text{BR}(B_H \rightarrow Hb) \times \text{BR}(H \rightarrow b\bar{b})$ for VLQ mass points with $m_{B_H} = m_{G^*} - 250$ GeV, from the combined merged and resolved analyses, as well as the theoretical prediction based on parameters given in Section 3. The uncertainty band around the theory cross section reflects the uncertainty in the CTEQ6.6 PDFs.

Ref. [23], a lower limit of 2.0 TeV on the G^* mass is obtained when $m_{G^*} = 2m_{B_H}$.

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Baas^{58a}, M.J. Baca¹⁸, H. Bachacou¹³⁵, K. Bachas^{73a,73b}, M. Backes³⁰, M. Backhaus³⁰, P. Bagiacchi^{131a,131b}, P. Bagnaia^{131a,131b}, Y. Bai^{33a}, J.T. Baines¹³⁰, O.K. Baker¹⁷⁵, E.M. Baldin^{108,c}, P. Balek¹²⁸, T. Balestri¹⁴⁷, F. Balli¹³⁵, W.K. Balunas¹²¹, E. Banas³⁹, Sw. Banerjee^{172,e}, A.A.E. Bannoura¹⁷⁴, L. Barak³⁰, E.L. Barberio⁸⁸, D. Barberis^{50a,50b}, M. Barbero⁸⁵, T. Barillari¹⁰⁰, M. Barisonzi^{163a,163b}, T. Barklow¹⁴², N. Barlow²⁸, S.L. Barnes⁸⁴, B.M. Barnett¹³⁰, R.M. Barnett¹⁵, Z. Barnovska⁵, A. Baronecelli^{133a}, G. Barone²³, A.J. Barr¹¹⁹, L. Barranco Navarro¹⁶⁶, F. Barreiro⁸², J. Barreiro Guimarães da Costa^{33a}, R. Bartoldus¹⁴², A.E. Barton⁷², P. Bartos^{143a}, A. Basalae¹²², A. Bassalat¹¹⁶, A. Basye¹⁶⁴, R.L. Bates⁵³, S.J. Batista¹⁵⁷, J.R. Batley²⁸, M. Battaglia¹³⁶, M. Bauce^{131a,131b}, F. Bauer¹³⁵, H.S. Bawa^{142,f}, J.B. Beacham¹¹⁰, M.D. Beattie⁷², T. Beau⁸⁰, P.H. Beauchemin¹⁶⁰, R. Beccherle^{123a,123b}, P. Bechtel²¹, H.P. Beck^{17,g}, K. Becker¹¹⁹, M. Becker⁸³, M. Beckingham¹⁶⁹, C. Becot¹⁰⁹, A.J. Beddall^{19e}, A. Beddall^{19b}, V.A. Bednyakov⁶⁵, M. Bedognetti¹⁰⁶, C.P. Bee¹⁴⁷, L.J. Beemster¹⁰⁶, T.A. Beermann³⁰, M. Begel²⁵, J.K. Behr¹¹⁹, C. Belanger-Champagne⁸⁷, A.S. Bell⁷⁸, W.H. Bell⁴⁹, G. Bella¹⁵², L. Bellagamba^{20a}, A. Bellerive²⁹, M. Bellomo⁸⁶, K. Belotskiy⁹⁷, O. Beltramello³⁰, N.L. Belyaev⁹⁷, O. Benary¹⁵², D. Benchechroun^{134a}, M. Bender⁹⁹, K. Bendtz^{145a,145b}, N. Benekos¹⁰, Y. Benhammou¹⁵², E. Benhar Noccioli¹⁷⁵, J. Benitez⁶³, J.A. Benitez Garcia^{158b}, D.P. Benjamin⁴⁵, J.R. Bensinger²³, S. Bentvelsen¹⁰⁶, L. Beresford¹¹⁹, M. Beretta⁴⁷, D. Berge¹⁰⁶, E. Bergeaas Kuutmann¹⁶⁵, N. Berger⁵, F. Berghaus¹⁶⁸, J. Beringer¹⁵, S. Berlendis⁵⁵, C. Bernard²², N.R. Bernard⁸⁶, C. Bernius¹⁰⁹, F.U. Bernlochner²¹, T. Berry⁷⁷, P. Berta¹²⁸, C. Bertella⁸³, G. Bertoli^{145a,145b}, F. Bertolucci^{123a,123b}, C. Bertsche¹¹², D. Bertsche¹¹², G.J. Besjes³⁶, O. Bessidskaia Bylund^{145a,145b}, M. Bessner⁴², N. Besson¹³⁵, C. Betancourt⁴⁸, S. Bethke¹⁰⁰, A.J. Bevan⁷⁶, W. Bhimji¹⁵, R.M. Bianchi¹²⁴, L. Bianchini²³, M. Bianco³⁰, O. Biebel⁹⁹, D. Biedermann¹⁶, R. Bielski⁸⁴, N.V. Biesuz^{123a,123b}, M. Biglietti^{133a}, J. Bilbao De Mendizabal⁴⁹, H. Bilokon⁴⁷, M. Bindi⁵⁴, S. Binet¹¹⁶, A. Bingul^{19b}, C. Bini^{131a,131b}, S. Biondi^{20a,20b}, D.M. Bjergaard⁴⁵, C.W. Black¹⁴⁹, J.E. Black¹⁴², K.M. Black²², D. Blackburn¹³⁷, R.E. Blair⁶, J.-B. Blanchard¹³⁵, J.E. Blanco⁷⁷, T. Blazek^{143a}, I. Bloch⁴², C. Blocker²³, W. Blum^{83,*}, U. Blumenschein⁵⁴, S. Blunier^{32a}, G.J. Bobbink¹⁰⁶, V.S. Bobrovnikov^{108,c}, S.S. Bocchetta⁸¹, A. Bocci⁴⁵, C. Bock⁹⁹, M. Boehler⁴⁸, D. Boerner¹⁷⁴, J.A. Bogaerts³⁰, D. Bogavac¹³, A.G. Bogdanchikov¹⁰⁸, C. Bohm^{145a}, V. Boisvert⁷⁷, T. Bold^{38a}, V. Boldea^{26b}, A.S. Boldyrev⁹⁸, M. Bomben⁸⁰, M. Bona⁷⁶, M. Boonekamp¹³⁵, A. Borisov¹²⁹, G. Borissov⁷², J. Bortfeldt⁹⁹, D. Bortoletto¹¹⁹, V. Bortolotto^{60a,60b,60c}, K. Bos¹⁰⁶, D. Boscherini^{20a}, M. Bosman¹², J.D. Bossio Sola²⁷, J. Boudreau¹²⁴, J. Bouffard², E.V. Bouhova-Thacker⁷², D. Boumediene³⁴, C. Bourdarios¹¹⁶, N. Bousson¹¹³, S.K. Boutle⁵³, A. Boveia³⁰, J. Boyd³⁰, I.R. Boyko⁶⁵, J. Bracinik¹⁸, A. Brandt⁸, G. Brandt⁵⁴, O. Brandt^{58a}, U. Bratzler¹⁵⁵, B. Brau⁸⁶, J.E. Brau¹¹⁵, H.M. Braun^{174,*}, W.D. Breaden Madden⁵³,

K. Brendlinger¹²¹, A.J. Brennan⁸⁸, L. Brenner¹⁰⁶, R. Brenner¹⁶⁵, S. Bressler¹⁷¹, T.M. Bristow⁴⁶, D. Britton⁵³, D. Britzger⁴², F.M. Brochu²⁸, I. Brock²¹, R. Brock⁹⁰, G. Brooijmans³⁵, T. Brooks⁷⁷, W.K. Brooks^{32b}, J. Brosamer¹⁵, E. Brost¹¹⁵, P.A. Bruckman de Renstrom³⁹, D. Bruncko^{143b}, R. Bruneliere⁴⁸, A. Bruni^{20a}, G. Bruni^{20a}, B.H. Brunt²⁸, M. Bruschi^{20a}, N. Bruscino²¹, P. Bryant³¹, L. Bryngemark⁸¹, T. Buanes¹⁴, Q. Buat¹⁴¹, P. Buchholz¹⁴⁰, A.G. Buckley⁵³, I.A. Budagov⁶⁵, F. Buehrer⁴⁸, M.K. Bugge¹¹⁸, O. Bulekov⁹⁷, D. Bullock⁸, H. Burckhart³⁰, S. Burdin⁷⁴, C.D. Burgard⁴⁸, B. Burghgrave¹⁰⁷, K. Burka³⁹, S. Burke¹³⁰, I. Burmeister⁴³, E. Busato³⁴, D. Büscher⁴⁸, V. Büscher⁸³, P. Bussey⁵³, J.M. Butler²², A.I. Butt³, C.M. Buttar⁵³, J.M. Butterworth⁷⁸, P. Butti¹⁰⁶, W. Buttinger²⁵, A. Buzatu⁵³, A.R. Buzykaev^{108,c}, S. Cabrera Urbán¹⁶⁶, D. Caforio¹²⁷, V.M. Cairo^{37a,37b}, O. Cakir^{4a}, N. Calace⁴⁹, P. Calafiura¹⁵, A. Calandri⁸⁵, G. Calderini⁸⁰, P. Calfayan⁹⁹, L.P. Caloba^{24a}, D. Calvet³⁴, S. Calvet³⁴, T.P. Calvet⁸⁵, R. Camacho Toro³¹, S. Camarda⁴², P. Camarri^{132a,132b}, D. Cameron¹¹⁸, R. Caminal Armadans¹⁶⁴, C. Camincher⁵⁵, S. Campana³⁰, M. Campanelli⁷⁸, A. Campoverde¹⁴⁷, V. Canale^{103a,103b}, A. Canepa^{158a}, M. Cano Bret^{33e}, J. Cantero⁸², R. Cantrill^{125a}, T. Cao⁴⁰, M.D.M. Capeans Garrido³⁰, I. Caprini^{26b}, M. Caprini^{26b}, M. Capua^{37a,37b}, R. Caputo⁸³, R.M. Carbone³⁵, R. Cardarelli^{132a}, F. Cardillo⁴⁸, T. Carli³⁰, G. Carlino^{103a}, L. Carminati^{91a,91b}, S. Caron¹⁰⁵, E. Carquin^{32a}, G.D. Carrillo-Montoya³⁰, J.R. Carter²⁸, J. Carvalho^{125a,125c}, D. Casadei⁷⁸, M.P. Casado^{12,h}, M. Casolino¹², D.W. Casper¹⁶², E. Castaneda-Miranda^{144a}, A. Castelli¹⁰⁶, V. Castillo Gimenez¹⁶⁶, N.F. Castro^{125a,i}, A. Catinaccio³⁰, J.R. Catmore¹¹⁸, A. Cattai³⁰, J. Caudron⁸³, V. Cavaliere¹⁶⁴, D. Cavalli^{91a}, M. Cavalli-Sforza¹², V. Cavasinni^{123a,123b}, F. Ceradini^{133a,133b}, L. Cerda Alberich¹⁶⁶, B.C. Cerio⁴⁵, A.S. Cerqueira^{24b}, A. Cerri¹⁴⁸, L. Cerrito⁷⁶, F. Cerutti¹⁵, M. Cerv³⁰, A. Cervelli¹⁷, S.A. Cetin^{19d}, A. Chafaq^{134a}, D. Chakraborty¹⁰⁷, I. Chalupkova¹²⁸, Y.L. Chan^{60a}, P. Chang¹⁶⁴, J.D. Chapman²⁸, D.G. Charlton¹⁸, C.C. Chau¹⁵⁷, C.A. Chavez Barajas¹⁴⁸, S. Che¹¹⁰, S. Cheatham⁷², A. Chegwiddden⁹⁰, S. Chekanov⁶, S.V. Chekulaev^{158a}, G.A. Chelkov^{65,j}, M.A. Chelstowska⁸⁹, C. Chen⁶⁴, H. Chen²⁵, K. Chen¹⁴⁷, S. Chen^{33c}, S. Chen¹⁵⁴, X. Chen^{33f}, Y. Chen⁶⁷, H.C. Cheng⁸⁹, Y. Cheng³¹, A. Cheplakov⁶⁵, E. Cheremushkina¹²⁹, R. Cherkaoui El Moursli^{134e}, V. Chernyatin^{25,*}, E. Cheu⁷, L. Chevalier¹³⁵, V. Chiarella⁴⁷, G. Chiarelli^{123a,123b}, G. Chiodini^{73a}, A.S. Chisholm¹⁸, A. Chitan^{26b}, M.V. Chizhov⁶⁵, K. Choi⁶¹, S. Chouridou⁹, B.K.B. Chow⁹⁹, V. Christodoulou⁷⁸, D. Chromek-Burckhart³⁰, J. Chudoba¹²⁶, A.J. Chuinard⁸⁷, J.J. Chwastowski³⁹, L. Chytka¹¹⁴, G. Ciapetti^{131a,131b}, A.K. Ciftci^{4a}, D. Cinca⁵³, V. Cindro⁷⁵, I.A. Cioara²¹, A. Ciochio¹⁵, F. Ciotto^{103a,103b}, Z.H. Citron¹⁷¹, M. Ciubancan^{26b}, A. Clark⁴⁹, B.L. Clark⁵⁷, P.J. Clark⁴⁶, R.N. Clarke¹⁵, C. Clement^{145a,145b}, Y. Coadou⁸⁵, M. Cobal^{163a,163c}, A. Coccaro⁴⁹, J. Cochran⁶⁴, L. Coffey²³, L. Colasurdo¹⁰⁵, B. Cole³⁵, S. Cole¹⁰⁷, A.P. Colijn¹⁰⁶, J. Collot⁵⁵, T. Colombo³⁰, G. Compostella¹⁰⁰, P. Conde Muiño^{125a,125b}, E. Coniavitis⁴⁸, S.H. Connell^{144b}, I.A. Connelly⁷⁷, V. Consorti⁴⁸, S. Constantinescu^{26b}, C. Conta^{120a,120b}, G. Conti³⁰, F. Conventi^{103a,k}, M. Cooke¹⁵, B.D. Cooper⁷⁸, A.M. Cooper-Sarkar¹¹⁹, T. Cornelissen¹⁷⁴, M. Corradi^{131a,131b}, F. Corriveau^{87,l}, A. Corso-Radu¹⁶², A. Cortes-Gonzalez¹², G. Cortiana¹⁰⁰, G. Costa^{91a}, M.J. Costa¹⁶⁶, D. Costanzo¹³⁸, G. Cottin²⁸, G. Cowan⁷⁷, B.E. Cox⁸⁴, K. Cranmer¹⁰⁹, S.J. Crawley⁵³, G. Cree²⁹, S. Crépe-Renaudin⁵⁵, F. Crescioli⁸⁰, W.A. Cribbs^{145a,145b}, M. Crispin Ortuzar¹¹⁹, M. Cristinziani²¹, V. Croft¹⁰⁵, G. Crosetti^{37a,37b}, T. Cuhadar Donszelmann¹³⁸, J. Cummings¹⁷⁵, M. Curatolo⁴⁷, J. Cúth⁸³, C. Cuthbert¹⁴⁹, H. Czirr¹⁴⁰, P. Czodrowski³, S. D'Auria⁵³, M. D'Onofrio⁷⁴, M.J. Da Cunha Sargedadas De Sousa^{125a,125b}, C. Da Via⁸⁴, W. Dabrowski^{38a}, T. Dai⁸⁹, O. Dale¹⁴, F. Dallaire⁹⁴, C. Dallapiccola⁸⁶, M. Dam³⁶, J.R. Dandoy³¹, N.P. Dang⁴⁸, A.C. Daniells¹⁸, N.S. Dann⁸⁴, M. Danninger¹⁶⁷, M. Dano Hoffmann¹³⁵, V. Dao⁴⁸, G. Darbo^{50a}, S. Darmora⁸, J. Dassoulas³, A. Dattagupta⁶¹, W. Davey²¹, C. David¹⁶⁸, T. Davidek¹²⁸, M. Davies¹⁵², P. Davison⁷⁸, Y. Davygora^{58a}, E. Dawe⁸⁸, I. Dawson¹³⁸, R.K. Daya-Ishmukhametova⁸⁶, K. De⁸, R. de Asmundis^{103a}, A. De Benedetti¹¹², S. De Castro^{20a,20b}, S. De Cecco⁸⁰, N. De Groot¹⁰⁵, P. de Jong¹⁰⁶, H. De la Torre⁸², F. De Lorenzi⁶⁴, D. De Pedis^{131a}, A. De Salvo^{131a}, U. De Sanctis¹⁴⁸, A. De Santo¹⁴⁸, J.B. De Vivie De Regie¹¹⁶, W.J. Dearnaley⁷², R. Debbe²⁵, C. Debenedetti¹³⁶, D.V. Dedovich⁶⁵, I. Deigaard¹⁰⁶, J. Del Peso⁸², T. Del Prete^{123a,123b}, D. Delgove¹¹⁶, F. Deliot¹³⁵, C.M. Delitzsch⁴⁹, M. Deliyergiyev⁷⁵, A. Dell'Acqua³⁰, L. Dell'Asta²², M. Dell'Orso^{123a,123b}, M. Della Pietra^{103a,k}, D. della Volpe⁴⁹, M. Delmastro⁵, P.A. Delsart⁵⁵, C. Deluca¹⁰⁶, D.A. DeMarco¹⁵⁷, S. Demers¹⁷⁵, M. Demichev⁶⁵, A. Demilly⁸⁰, S.P. Denisov¹²⁹, D. Denysiuk¹³⁵, D. Derendarz³⁹, J.E. Derkaoui^{134d}, F. Derue⁸⁰, P. Dervan⁷⁴, K. Desch²¹, C. Deterre⁴², K. Dette⁴³, P.O. Deviveiros³⁰, A. Dewhurst¹³⁰, S. Dhaliwal²³, A. Di Ciaccio^{132a,132b},

L. Di Ciaccio⁵, W.K. Di Clemente¹²¹, A. Di Domenico^{131a,131b}, C. Di Donato^{131a,131b}, A. Di Girolamo³⁰,
 B. Di Girolamo³⁰, A. Di Mattia¹⁵¹, B. Di Micco^{133a,133b}, R. Di Nardo⁴⁷, A. Di Simone⁴⁸, R. Di Sipio¹⁵⁷,
 D. Di Valentino²⁹, C. Diaconu⁸⁵, M. Diamond¹⁵⁷, F.A. Dias⁴⁶, M.A. Diaz^{32a}, E.B. Diehl⁸⁹, J. Dietrich¹⁶,
 S. Diglio⁸⁵, A. Dimitrievska¹³, J. Dingfelder²¹, P. Dita^{26b}, S. Dita^{26b}, F. Dittus³⁰, F. Djama⁸⁵,
 T. Djobava^{51b}, J.I. Djuvsland^{58a}, M.A.B. do Vale^{24c}, D. Dobos³⁰, M. Dobre^{26b}, C. Doglioni⁸¹,
 T. Dohmae¹⁵⁴, J. Dolejsi¹²⁸, Z. Dolezal¹²⁸, B.A. Dolgoshein^{97,*}, M. Donadelli^{24d}, S. Donati^{123a,123b},
 P. Dondero^{120a,120b}, J. Donini³⁴, J. Dopke¹³⁰, A. Doria^{103a}, M.T. Dova⁷¹, A.T. Doyle⁵³, E. Drechsler⁵⁴,
 M. Dris¹⁰, Y. Du^{33d}, J. Duarte-Campderros¹⁵², E. Duchovni¹⁷¹, G. Duckeck⁹⁹, O.A. Ducu^{26b}, D. Duda¹⁰⁶,
 A. Dudarev³⁰, L. Dufloc¹¹⁶, L. Duguid⁷⁷, M. Dührssen³⁰, M. Dunford^{58a}, H. Duran Yildiz^{4a}, M. Düren⁵²,
 A. Durglishvili^{51b}, D. Duschinger⁴⁴, B. Dutta⁴², M. Dyndal^{38a}, C. Eckardt⁴², K.M. Ecker¹⁰⁰, R.C. Edgar⁸⁹,
 W. Edson², N.C. Edwards⁴⁶, T. Eifert³⁰, G. Eigen¹⁴, K. Einsweiler¹⁵, T. Ekelof¹⁶⁵, M. El Kacimi^{134c},
 V. Ellajosyula⁸⁵, M. Ellert¹⁶⁵, S. Elles⁵, F. Ellinghaus¹⁷⁴, A.A. Elliot¹⁶⁸, N. Ellis³⁰, J. Elmsheuser⁹⁹,
 M. Elsing³⁰, D. Emeliyanov¹³⁰, Y. Enari¹⁵⁴, O.C. Endner⁸³, M. Endo¹¹⁷, J.S. Ennis¹⁶⁹, J. Erdmann⁴³,
 A. Ereditato¹⁷, G. Ernis¹⁷⁴, J. Ernst², M. Ernst²⁵, S. Errede¹⁶⁴, E. Ertel⁸³, M. Escalier¹¹⁶, H. Esch⁴³,
 C. Escobar¹²⁴, B. Esposito⁴⁷, A.I. Etiennevire¹³⁵, E. Etzion¹⁵², H. Evans⁶¹, A. Ezhilov¹²², L. Fabbri^{20a,20b},
 G. Facini³¹, R.M. Fakhruddinov¹²⁹, S. Falciano^{131a}, R.J. Falla⁷⁸, J. Faltova¹²⁸, Y. Fang^{33a}, M. Fanti^{91a,91b},
 A. Farbin⁸, A. Farilla^{133a}, C. Farina¹²⁴, T. Farooque¹², S. Farrell¹⁵, S.M. Farrington¹⁶⁹, P. Farthouat³⁰,
 F. Fassi^{134e}, P. Fassnacht³⁰, D. Fassouliotis⁹, M. Faucci Giannelli⁷⁷, A. Favareto^{50a,50b}, L. Fayard¹¹⁶,
 O.L. Fedin^{122,m}, W. Fedorko¹⁶⁷, S. Feigl¹¹⁸, L. Feligioni⁸⁵, C. Feng^{33d}, E.J. Feng³⁰, H. Feng⁸⁹,
 A.B. Fenyuk¹²⁹, L. Feremenga⁸, P. Fernandez Martinez¹⁶⁶, S. Fernandez Perez¹², J. Ferrando⁵³,
 A. Ferrari¹⁶⁵, P. Ferrari¹⁰⁶, R. Ferrari^{120a}, D.E. Ferreira de Lima⁵³, A. Ferrer¹⁶⁶, D. Ferrere⁴⁹,
 C. Ferretti⁸⁹, A. Ferretto Parodi^{50a,50b}, F. Fiedler⁸³, A. Filipčič⁷⁵, M. Filipuzzi⁴², F. Filthaut¹⁰⁵,
 M. Fincke-Keeler¹⁶⁸, K.D. Finelli¹⁴⁹, M.C.N. Fiolhais^{125a,125c}, L. Fiorini¹⁶⁶, A. Firan⁴⁰, A. Fischer²,
 C. Fischer¹², J. Fischer¹⁷⁴, W.C. Fisher⁹⁰, N. Flaschel⁴², I. Fleck¹⁴⁰, P. Fleischmann⁸⁹, G.T. Fletcher¹³⁸,
 G. Fletcher⁷⁶, R.R.M. Fletcher¹²¹, T. Flick¹⁷⁴, A. Floderus⁸¹, L.R. Flores Castillo^{60a}, M.J. Flowerdew¹⁰⁰,
 G.T. Forcolin⁸⁴, A. Formica¹³⁵, A. Forti⁸⁴, D. Fournier¹¹⁶, H. Fox⁷², S. Fracchia¹², P. Francavilla⁸⁰,
 M. Franchini^{20a,20b}, D. Francis³⁰, L. Franconi¹¹⁸, M. Franklin⁵⁷, M. Frate¹⁶², M. Fraternali^{120a,120b},
 D. Freeborn⁷⁸, S.M. Fressard-Batraneanu³⁰, F. Friedrich⁴⁴, D. Froidevaux³⁰, J.A. Frost¹¹⁹, C. Fukunaga¹⁵⁵,
 E. Fullana Torregrosa⁸³, T. Fusayasu¹⁰¹, J. Fuster¹⁶⁶, C. Gabaldon⁵⁵, O. Gabizon¹⁷⁴, A. Gabrielli^{20a,20b},
 A. Gabrielli¹⁵, G.P. Gach^{38a}, S. Gadatsch³⁰, S. Gadomski⁴⁹, G. Gagliardi^{50a,50b}, P. Gagnon⁶¹, C. Galea¹⁰⁵,
 B. Galhardo^{125a,125c}, E.J. Gallas¹¹⁹, B.J. Gallop¹³⁰, P. Gallus¹²⁷, G. Galster³⁶, K.K. Gan¹¹⁰, J. Gao^{33b,85},
 Y. Gao⁴⁶, Y.S. Gao^{142,f}, F.M. Garay Walls⁴⁶, C. García¹⁶⁶, J.E. García Navarro¹⁶⁶, M. Garcia-Sciveres¹⁵,
 R.W. Gardner³¹, N. Garelli¹⁴², V. Garonne¹¹⁸, A. Gascon Bravo⁴², C. Gatti⁴⁷, A. Gaudiello^{50a,50b},
 G. Gaudio^{120a}, B. Gaur¹⁴⁰, L. Gauthier⁹⁴, I.L. Gavrilenko⁹⁵, C. Gay¹⁶⁷, G. Gaycken²¹, E.N. Gazis¹⁰,
 Z. Gece¹⁶⁷, C.N.P. Gee¹³⁰, Ch. Geich-Gimbel²¹, M.P. Geisler^{58a}, C. Gemme^{50a}, M.H. Genest⁵⁵,
 C. Geng^{33b,n}, S. Gentile^{131a,131b}, S. George⁷⁷, D. Gerbaudo¹⁶², A. Gershon¹⁵², S. Ghasemi¹⁴⁰,
 H. Ghazlane^{134b}, B. Giacobbe^{20a}, S. Giagu^{131a,131b}, P. Giannetti^{123a,123b}, B. Gibbard²⁵, S.M. Gibson⁷⁷,
 M. Gignac¹⁶⁷, M. Gilchriese¹⁵, T.P.S. Gillam²⁸, D. Gillberg²⁹, G. Gilles¹⁷⁴, D.M. Gingrich^{3,d}, N. Giokaris⁹,
 M.P. Giordani^{163a,163c}, F.M. Giorgi^{20a}, F.M. Giorgi¹⁶, P.F. Giraud¹³⁵, P. Giromini⁵⁷, D. Giugni^{91a},
 C. Giuliani¹⁰⁰, M. Giulini^{58b}, B.K. Gjelsten¹¹⁸, S. Gkaitatzis¹⁵³, I. Gkialas¹⁵³, E.L. Gkoukousis¹¹⁶,
 L.K. Gladilin⁹⁸, C. Glasman⁸², J. Glatzer³⁰, P.C.F. Glaysheer⁴⁶, A. Glazov⁴², M. Goblirsch-Kolb¹⁰⁰,
 J. Godlewski³⁹, S. Goldfarb⁸⁹, T. Golling⁴⁹, D. Golubkov¹²⁹, A. Gomes^{125a,125b,125d}, R. Gonçalves^{125a},
 J. Goncalves Pinto Firmino Da Costa¹³⁵, L. Gonella¹⁸, A. Gongadze⁶⁵, S. González de la Hoz¹⁶⁶,
 G. Gonzalez Parra¹², S. Gonzalez-Sevilla⁴⁹, L. Goossens³⁰, P.A. Gorbounov⁹⁶, H.A. Gordon²⁵,
 I. Gorelov¹⁰⁴, B. Gorini³⁰, E. Gorini^{73a,73b}, A. Gorišek⁷⁵, E. Gornicki³⁹, A.T. Goshaw⁴⁵, C. Gössling⁴³,
 M.I. Gostkin⁶⁵, C.R. Goudet¹¹⁶, D. Goujdami^{134c}, A.G. Goussiou¹³⁷, N. Govender^{144b}, E. Gozani¹⁵¹,
 L. Graber⁵⁴, I. Grabowska-Bold^{38a}, P.O.J. Gradin¹⁶⁵, P. Grafström^{20a,20b}, J. Gramling⁴⁹, E. Gramstad¹¹⁸,
 S. Grancagnolo¹⁶, V. Gratchev¹²², H.M. Gray³⁰, E. Graziani^{133a}, Z.D. Greenwood^{79,o}, C. Greife²¹,
 K. Gregersen⁷⁸, I.M. Gregor⁴², P. Grenier¹⁴², K. Grevtsov⁵, J. Griffiths⁸, A.A. Grillo¹³⁶, K. Grimm⁷²,
 S. Grinstein^{12,p}, Ph. Gris³⁴, J.-F. Grivaz¹¹⁶, S. Groh⁸³, J.P. Grohs⁴⁴, E. Gross¹⁷¹, J. Grosse-Knetter⁵⁴,
 G.C. Grossi⁷⁹, Z.J. Grout¹⁴⁸, L. Guan⁸⁹, W. Guan¹⁷², J. Guenther¹²⁷, F. Guescini⁴⁹, D. Guest¹⁶²,
 O. Gueta¹⁵², E. Guido^{50a,50b}, T. Guillemin⁵, S. Guindon², U. Gul⁵³, C. Gumpert³⁰, J. Guo^{33e}, Y. Guo^{33b,n},

S. Gupta¹¹⁹, G. Gustavino^{131a,131b}, P. Gutierrez¹¹², N.G. Gutierrez Ortiz⁷⁸, C. Gutsche⁴⁴, C. Guyot¹³⁵, C. Gwenlan¹¹⁹, C.B. Gwilliam⁷⁴, A. Haas¹⁰⁹, C. Haber¹⁵, H.K. Hadavand⁸, N. Haddad^{134e}, A. Hadeef⁸⁵, P. Haefner²¹, S. Hageböck²¹, Z. Hajduk³⁹, H. Hakobyan^{176,*}, M. Haleem⁴², J. Haley¹¹³, D. Hall¹¹⁹, G. Halladjian⁹⁰, G.D. Hallewell⁸⁵, K. Hamacher¹⁷⁴, P. Hamal¹¹⁴, K. Hamano¹⁶⁸, A. Hamilton^{144a}, G.N. Hamity¹³⁸, P.G. Hamnett⁴², L. Han^{33b}, K. Hanagaki^{66,q}, K. Hanawa¹⁵⁴, M. Hance¹³⁶, B. Haney¹²¹, P. Hanke^{58a}, R. Hanna¹³⁵, J.B. Hansen³⁶, J.D. Hansen³⁶, M.C. Hansen²¹, P.H. Hansen³⁶, K. Hara¹⁵⁹, A.S. Hard¹⁷², T. Harenberg¹⁷⁴, F. Hariri¹¹⁶, S. Harkusha⁹², R.D. Harrington⁴⁶, P.F. Harrison¹⁶⁹, F. Hartjes¹⁰⁶, M. Hasegawa⁶⁷, Y. Hasegawa¹³⁹, A. Hasib¹¹², S. Hassani¹³⁵, S. Haug¹⁷, R. Hauser⁹⁰, L. Hauswald⁴⁴, M. Havranek¹²⁶, C.M. Hawkes¹⁸, R.J. Hawking³⁰, A.D. Hawkins⁸¹, D. Hayden⁹⁰, C.P. Hays¹¹⁹, J.M. Hays⁷⁶, H.S. Hayward⁷⁴, S.J. Haywood¹³⁰, S.J. Head¹⁸, T. Heck⁸³, V. Hedberg⁸¹, L. Heelan⁸, S. Heim¹²¹, T. Heim¹⁵, B. Heinemann¹⁵, J.J. Heinrich⁹⁹, L. Heinrich¹⁰⁹, C. Heinz⁵², J. Hejbal¹²⁶, L. Helary²², S. Hellman^{145a,145b}, C. Helsens³⁰, J. Henderson¹¹⁹, R.C.W. Henderson⁷², Y. Heng¹⁷², S. Henkelmann¹⁶⁷, A.M. Henriques Correia³⁰, S. Henrot-Versille¹¹⁶, G.H. Herbert¹⁶, Y. Hernández Jiménez¹⁶⁶, G. Herten⁴⁸, R. Hertenberger⁹⁹, L. Hervas³⁰, G.G. Hesketh⁷⁸, N.P. Hessey¹⁰⁶, J.W. Hetherly⁴⁰, R. Hickling⁷⁶, E. Higón-Rodríguez¹⁶⁶, E. Hill¹⁶⁸, J.C. Hill²⁸, K.H. Hiller⁴², S.J. Hillier¹⁸, I. Hinchliffe¹⁵, E. Hines¹²¹, R.R. Hinman¹⁵, M. Hirose¹⁵⁶, D. Hirschbuehl¹⁷⁴, J. Hobbs¹⁴⁷, N. Hod¹⁰⁶, M.C. Hodgkinson¹³⁸, P. Hodgson¹³⁸, A. Hoecker³⁰, M.R. Hoferkamp¹⁰⁴, F. Hoenig⁹⁹, M. Hohlfield⁸³, D. Hohn²¹, T.R. Holmes¹⁵, M. Homann⁴³, T.M. Hong¹²⁴, B.H. Hooberman¹⁶⁴, W.H. Hopkins¹¹⁵, Y. Horii¹⁰², A.J. Horton¹⁴¹, J.-Y. Hostachy⁵⁵, S. Hou¹⁵⁰, A. Hoummada^{134a}, J. Howard¹¹⁹, J. Howarth⁴², M. Hrabovsky¹¹⁴, I. Hristova¹⁶, J. Hrivnac¹¹⁶, T. Hryn'ova⁵, A. Hrynevich⁹³, C. Hsu^{144c}, P.J. Hsu^{150,r}, S.-C. Hsu¹³⁷, D. Hu³⁵, Q. Hu^{33b}, Y. Huang⁴², Z. Hubacek¹²⁷, F. Hubaut⁸⁵, F. Huegging²¹, T.B. Huffman¹¹⁹, E.W. Hughes³⁵, G. Hughes⁷², M. Huhtinen³⁰, T.A. Hülsing⁸³, N. Huseynov^{65,b}, J. Huston⁹⁰, J. Huth⁵⁷, G. Iacobucci⁴⁹, G. Iakovidis²⁵, I. Ibragimov¹⁴⁰, L. Iconomidou-Fayard¹¹⁶, E. Ideal¹⁷⁵, Z. Idrissi^{134e}, P. Iengo³⁰, O. Igonkina¹⁰⁶, T. Iizawa¹⁷⁰, Y. Ikegami⁶⁶, M. Ikeno⁶⁶, Y. Ilchenko^{31,s}, D. Iliadis¹⁵³, N. Ilic¹⁴², T. Ince¹⁰⁰, G. Introzzi^{120a,120b}, P. Ioannou^{9,*}, M. Iodice^{133a}, K. Iordanidou³⁵, V. Ippolito⁵⁷, A. Irles Quiles¹⁶⁶, C. Isaksson¹⁶⁵, M. Ishino⁶⁸, M. Ishitsuka¹⁵⁶, R. Ishmukhametov¹¹⁰, C. Issever¹¹⁹, S. Istina^{19a}, F. Ito¹⁵⁹, J.M. Iturbe Ponce⁸⁴, R. Iuppa^{132a,132b}, J. Ivarsson⁸¹, W. Iwanski³⁹, H. Iwasaki⁶⁶, J.M. Izen⁴¹, V. Izzo^{103a}, S. Jabbar³, B. Jackson¹²¹, M. Jackson⁷⁴, P. Jackson¹, V. Jain², K.B. Jakobi⁸³, K. Jakobs⁴⁸, S. Jakobsen³⁰, T. Jakoubek¹²⁶, D.O. Jamin¹¹³, D.K. Jana⁷⁹, E. Jansen⁷⁸, R. Jansky⁶², J. Janssen²¹, M. Janus⁵⁴, G. Jarlskog⁸¹, N. Javadov^{65,b}, T. Javůrek⁴⁸, F. Jeanneau¹³⁵, L. Jeanty¹⁵, J. Jejelava^{51a,t}, G.-Y. Jeng¹⁴⁹, D. Jennens⁸⁸, P. Jenni^{48,u}, J. Jentzsch⁴³, C. Jeske¹⁶⁹, S. Jézéquel⁵, H. Ji¹⁷², J. Jia¹⁴⁷, H. Jiang⁶⁴, Y. Jiang^{33b}, S. Jiggins⁷⁸, J. Jimenez Pena¹⁶⁶, S. Jin^{33a}, A. Jinaru^{26b}, O. Jinnouchi¹⁵⁶, P. Johansson¹³⁸, K.A. Johns⁷, W.J. Johnson¹³⁷, K. Jon-And^{145a,145b}, G. Jones¹⁶⁹, R.W.L. Jones⁷², S. Jones⁷, T.J. Jones⁷⁴, J. Jongmanns^{58a}, P.M. Jorge^{125a,125b}, J. Jovicevic^{158a}, X. Ju¹⁷², A. Juste Rozas^{12,p}, M.K. Köhler¹⁷¹, M. Kaci¹⁶⁶, A. Kaczmarska³⁹, M. Kado¹¹⁶, H. Kagan¹¹⁰, M. Kagan¹⁴², S.J. Kahn⁸⁵, E. Kajomovitz⁴⁵, C.W. Kalderon¹¹⁹, A. Kaluza⁸³, S. Kama⁴⁰, A. Kamenshchikov¹²⁹, N. Kanaya¹⁵⁴, S. Kaneti²⁸, V.A. Kantserov⁹⁷, J. Kanzaki⁶⁶, B. Kaplan¹⁰⁹, L.S. Kaplan¹⁷², A. Kapliy³¹, D. Kar^{144c}, K. Karakostas¹⁰, A. Karamaoun³, N. Karastathis^{10,106}, M.J. Kareem⁵⁴, E. Karentzos¹⁰, M. Karnevskiy⁸³, S.N. Karpov⁶⁵, Z.M. Karpova⁶⁵, K. Karthik¹⁰⁹, V. Kartvelishvili⁷², A.N. Karyukhin¹²⁹, K. Kasahara¹⁵⁹, L. Kashif¹⁷², R.D. Kass¹¹⁰, A. Kastanas¹⁴, Y. Kataoka¹⁵⁴, C. Kato¹⁵⁴, A. Katre⁴⁹, J. Katzy⁴², K. Kawade¹⁰², K. Kawagoe⁷⁰, T. Kawamoto¹⁵⁴, G. Kawamura⁵⁴, S. Kazama¹⁵⁴, V.F. Kazanin^{108,c}, R. Keeler¹⁶⁸, R. Kehoe⁴⁰, J.S. Keller⁴², J.J. Kempster⁷⁷, H. Keoshkerian⁸⁴, O. Kepka¹²⁶, B.P. Kerševan⁷⁵, S. Kersten¹⁷⁴, R.A. Keyes⁸⁷, F. Khalil-zada¹¹, H. Khandanyan^{145a,145b}, A. Khanov¹¹³, A.G. Kharlamov^{108,c}, T.J. Khoo²⁸, V. Khovanskiy⁹⁶, E. Khramov⁶⁵, J. Khubua^{51b,v}, S. Kido⁶⁷, H.Y. Kim⁸, S.H. Kim¹⁵⁹, Y.K. Kim³¹, N. Kimura¹⁵³, O.M. Kind¹⁶, B.T. King⁷⁴, M. King¹⁶⁶, S.B. King¹⁶⁷, J. Kirk¹³⁰, A.E. Kiryunin¹⁰⁰, T. Kishimoto⁶⁷, D. Kisiielewska^{38a}, F. Kiss⁴⁸, K. Kiuchi¹⁵⁹, O. Kivernyk¹³⁵, E. Kladiva^{143b}, M.H. Klein³⁵, M. Klein⁷⁴, U. Klein⁷⁴, K. Kleinknecht⁸³, P. Klimek^{145a,145b}, A. Klimentov²⁵, R. Klingenberg⁴³, J.A. Klinger¹³⁸, T. Klioutchnikova³⁰, E.-E. Kluge^{58a}, P. Kluit¹⁰⁶, S. Kluth¹⁰⁰, J. Knapik³⁹, E. Kneringer⁶², E.B.F.G. Knoops⁸⁵, A. Knue⁵³, A. Kobayashi¹⁵⁴, D. Kobayashi¹⁵⁶, T. Kobayashi¹⁵⁴, M. Kobel⁴⁴, M. Kocian¹⁴², P. Kodys¹²⁸, T. Koffas²⁹, E. Koffeman¹⁰⁶, L.A. Kogan¹¹⁹, T. Kohriki⁶⁶, T. Koi¹⁴², H. Kolanoski¹⁶, M. Kolb^{58b}, I. Koletsou⁵, A.A. Komar^{95,*}, Y. Komori¹⁵⁴, T. Kondo⁶⁶, N. Kondrashova⁴²,

K. Köneke⁴⁸, A.C. König¹⁰⁵, T. Kono^{66,w}, R. Konoplich^{109,x}, N. Konstantinidis⁷⁸, R. Kopeliansky⁶¹, S. Koperny^{38a}, L. Köpke⁸³, A.K. Kopp⁴⁸, K. Korcyl³⁹, K. Kordas¹⁵³, A. Korn⁷⁸, A.A. Korol^{108,c}, I. Korolkov¹², E.V. Korolkova¹³⁸, O. Kortner¹⁰⁰, S. Kortner¹⁰⁰, T. Kosek¹²⁸, V.V. Kostyukhin²¹, V.M. Kotov⁶⁵, A. Kotwal⁴⁵, A. Kourkumeli-Charalampidi¹⁵³, C. Kourkumelis⁹, V. Kouskoura²⁵, A. Koutsman^{158a}, R. Kowalewski¹⁶⁸, T.Z. Kowalski^{38a}, W. Kozanecki¹³⁵, A.S. Kozhin¹²⁹, V.A. Kramarenko⁹⁸, G. Kramberger⁷⁵, D. Krasnopevtsev⁹⁷, M.W. Krasny⁸⁰, A. Krasznahorkay³⁰, J.K. Kraus²¹, A. Kravchenko²⁵, M. Kretz^{58c}, J. Kretzschmar⁷⁴, K. Kreutzfeldt⁵², P. Krieger¹⁵⁷, K. Krizka³¹, K. Kroeninger⁴³, H. Kroha¹⁰⁰, J. Kroll¹²¹, J. Kroseberg²¹, J. Krstic¹³, U. Kruchonak⁶⁵, H. Krüger²¹, N. Krumnack⁶⁴, A. Kruse¹⁷², M.C. Kruse⁴⁵, M. Kruskal²², T. Kubota⁸⁸, H. Kucuk⁷⁸, S. Kuday^{4b}, J.T. Kuechler¹⁷⁴, S. Kuehn⁴⁸, A. Kugel^{58c}, F. Kuger¹⁷³, A. Kuhl¹³⁶, T. Kuhl⁴², V. Kukhtin⁶⁵, R. Kukla¹³⁵, Y. Kulchitsky⁹², S. Kuleshov^{32b}, M. Kuna^{131a,131b}, T. Kunigo⁶⁸, A. Kupco¹²⁶, H. Kurashige⁶⁷, Y.A. Kurochkin⁹², V. Kus¹²⁶, E.S. Kuwertz¹⁶⁸, M. Kuze¹⁵⁶, J. Kvita¹¹⁴, T. Kwan¹⁶⁸, D. Kyriazopoulos¹³⁸, A. La Rosa¹⁰⁰, J.L. La Rosa Navarro^{24d}, L. La Rotonda^{37a,37b}, C. Lacasta¹⁶⁶, F. Lacava^{131a,131b}, J. Lacey²⁹, H. Lacker¹⁶, D. Lacour⁸⁰, V.R. Lacuesta¹⁶⁶, E. Ladygin⁶⁵, R. Lafaye⁵, B. Laforge⁸⁰, T. Lagouri¹⁷⁵, S. Lai⁵⁴, S. Lammers⁶¹, W. Lampl⁷, E. Lançon¹³⁵, U. Landgraf⁴⁸, M.P.J. Landon⁷⁶, V.S. Lang^{58a}, J.C. Lange¹², A.J. Lankford¹⁶², F. Lanni²⁵, K. Lantzsch²¹, A. Lanza^{120a}, S. Laplace⁸⁰, C. Lapoire³⁰, J.F. Laporte¹³⁵, T. Lari^{91a}, F. Lasagni Manghi^{20a,20b}, M. Lassnig³⁰, P. Laurelli⁴⁷, W. Lavrijsen¹⁵, A.T. Law¹³⁶, P. Laycock⁷⁴, T. Lazovich⁵⁷, O. Le Dortz⁸⁰, E. Le Guirriec⁸⁵, E. Le Menedeu¹², E.P. Le Quilleuc¹³⁵, M. LeBlanc¹⁶⁸, T. LeCompte⁶, F. Ledroit-Guillon⁵⁵, C.A. Lee²⁵, S.C. Lee¹⁵⁰, L. Lee¹, G. Lefebvre⁸⁰, M. Lefebvre¹⁶⁸, F. Legger⁹⁹, C. Leggett¹⁵, A. Lehan⁷⁴, G. Lehmann Miotto³⁰, X. Lei⁷, W.A. Leight²⁹, A. Leisos^{153,y}, A.G. Leister¹⁷⁵, M.A.L. Leite^{24d}, R. Leitner¹²⁸, D. Lellouch¹⁷¹, B. Lemmer⁵⁴, K.J.C. Leney⁷⁸, T. Lenz²¹, B. Lenzi³⁰, R. Leone⁷, S. Leone^{123a,123b}, C. Leonidopoulos⁴⁶, S. Leontsinis¹⁰, C. Leroy⁹⁴, A.A.J. Lesage¹³⁵, C.G. Lester²⁸, M. Levchenko¹²², J. Levêque⁵, D. Levin⁸⁹, L.J. Levinson¹⁷¹, M. Levy¹⁸, A.M. Leyko²¹, M. Leyton⁴¹, B. Li^{33b,z}, H. Li¹⁴⁷, H.L. Li³¹, L. Li⁴⁵, L. Li^{33e}, Q. Li^{33a}, S. Li⁴⁵, X. Li⁸⁴, Y. Li¹⁴⁰, Z. Liang¹³⁶, H. Liao³⁴, B. Liberti^{132a}, A. Liblong¹⁵⁷, P. Lichard³⁰, K. Lie¹⁶⁴, J. Liebal²¹, W. Liebig¹⁴, C. Limbach²¹, A. Limosani¹⁴⁹, S.C. Lin^{150,aa}, T.H. Lin⁸³, B.E. Lindquist¹⁴⁷, E. Lipeles¹²¹, A. Lipniacka¹⁴, M. Lisovyi^{58b}, T.M. Liss¹⁶⁴, D. Lissauer²⁵, A. Lister¹⁶⁷, A.M. Litke¹³⁶, B. Liu^{150,ab}, D. Liu¹⁵⁰, H. Liu⁸⁹, H. Liu²⁵, J. Liu⁸⁵, J.B. Liu^{33b}, K. Liu⁸⁵, L. Liu¹⁶⁴, M. Liu⁴⁵, M. Liu^{33b}, Y.L. Liu^{33b}, Y. Liu^{33b}, M. Livan^{120a,120b}, A. Lleres⁵⁵, J. Llorente Merino⁸², S.L. Lloyd⁷⁶, F. Lo Sterzo¹⁵⁰, E. Lobodzinska⁴², P. Loch⁷, W.S. Lockman¹³⁶, F.K. Loebinger⁸⁴, A.E. Loevschall-Jensen³⁶, K.M. Loew²³, A. Loginov¹⁷⁵, T. Lohse¹⁶, K. Lohwasser⁴², M. Lokajicek¹²⁶, B.A. Long²², J.D. Long¹⁶⁴, R.E. Long⁷², L. Longo^{73a,73b}, K.A. Looper¹¹⁰, L. Lopes^{125a}, D. Lopez Mateos⁵⁷, B. Lopez Paredes¹³⁸, I. Lopez Paz¹², A. Lopez Solis⁸⁰, J. Lorenz⁹⁹, N. Lorenzo Martinez⁶¹, M. Losada¹⁶¹, P.J. Lösel⁹⁹, X. Lou^{33a}, A. Lounis¹¹⁶, J. Love⁶, P.A. Love⁷², H. Lu^{60a}, N. Lu⁸⁹, H.J. Lubatti¹³⁷, C. Luci^{131a,131b}, A. Lucotte⁵⁵, C. Luedtke⁴⁸, F. Luehring⁶¹, W. Lukas⁶², L. Luminari^{131a}, O. Lundberg^{145a,145b}, B. Lund-Jensen¹⁴⁶, D. Lynn²⁵, R. Lysak¹²⁶, E. Lytken⁸¹, H. Ma²⁵, L.L. Ma^{33d}, G. Maccarrone⁴⁷, A. Macchiolo¹⁰⁰, C.M. Macdonald¹³⁸, B. Maček⁷⁵, J. Machado Miguens^{121,125b}, D. Madaffari⁸⁵, R. Madar³⁴, H.J. Maddocks¹⁶⁵, W.F. Mader⁴⁴, A. Madsen⁴², J. Maeda⁶⁷, S. Maeland¹⁴, T. Maeno²⁵, A. Maevskiy⁹⁸, E. Magradze⁵⁴, J. Mahlstedt¹⁰⁶, C. Maiani¹¹⁶, C. Maidantchik^{24a}, A.A. Maier¹⁰⁰, T. Maier⁹⁹, A. Maio^{125a,125b,125d}, S. Majewski¹¹⁵, Y. Makida⁶⁶, N. Makovec¹¹⁶, B. Malaescu⁸⁰, Pa. Malecki³⁹, V.P. Maleev¹²², F. Malek⁵⁵, U. Mallik⁶³, D. Malon⁶, C. Malone¹⁴², S. Maltezos¹⁰, V.M. Malyshev¹⁰⁸, S. Malyukov³⁰, J. Mamuzic⁴², G. Mancini⁴⁷, B. Mandelli³⁰, L. Mandelli^{91a}, I. Mandić⁷⁵, J. Maneira^{125a,125b}, L. Manhaes de Andrade Filho^{24b}, J. Manjarres Ramos^{158b}, A. Mann⁹⁹, B. Mansoulie¹³⁵, R. Mantifel⁸⁷, M. Mantoani⁵⁴, S. Manzoni^{91a,91b}, L. Mapelli³⁰, G. Marceca²⁷, L. March⁴⁹, G. Marchiori⁸⁰, M. Marcisovsky¹²⁶, M. Marjanovic¹³, D.E. Marley⁸⁹, F. Marroquim^{24a}, S.P. Marsden⁸⁴, Z. Marshall¹⁵, L.F. Marti¹⁷, S. Marti-Garcia¹⁶⁶, B. Martin⁹⁰, T.A. Martin¹⁶⁹, V.J. Martin⁴⁶, B. Martin dit Latour¹⁴, M. Martinez^{12,p}, S. Martin-Haugh¹³⁰, V.S. Martoiu^{26b}, A.C. Martyniuk⁷⁸, M. Marx¹³⁷, F. Marzano^{131a}, A. Marzin³⁰, L. Masetti⁸³, T. Mashimo¹⁵⁴, R. Mashinistov⁹⁵, J. Masik⁸⁴, A.L. Maslennikov^{108,c}, I. Massa^{20a,20b}, L. Massa^{20a,20b}, P. Mastrandrea⁵, A. Mastroberardino^{37a,37b}, T. Masubuchi¹⁵⁴, P. Mättig¹⁷⁴, J. Mattmann⁸³, J. Maurer^{26b}, S.J. Maxfield⁷⁴, D.A. Maximov^{108,c}, R. Mazini¹⁵⁰, S.M. Mazza^{91a,91b}, N.C. Mc Fadden¹⁰⁴, G. Mc Goldrick¹⁵⁷, S.P. Mc Kee⁸⁹, A. McCarn⁸⁹, R.L. McCarthy¹⁴⁷, T.G. McCarthy²⁹, L.I. McClymont⁷⁸, K.W. McFarlane^{56,*}, J.A. Mcfayden⁷⁸, G. Mchedlidze⁵⁴, S.J. McMahon¹³⁰, R.A. McPherson^{168,l},

M. Medinnis⁴², S. Meehan¹³⁷, S. Mehlhase⁹⁹, A. Mehta⁷⁴, K. Meier^{58a}, C. Meineck⁹⁹, B. Meirose⁴¹, B.R. Mellado Garcia^{144c}, F. Meloni¹⁷, A. Mengarelli^{20a,20b}, S. Menke¹⁰⁰, E. Meoni¹⁶⁰, K.M. Mercurio⁵⁷, S. Mergelmeyer¹⁶, P. Mermoud⁴⁹, L. Merola^{103a,103b}, C. Meroni^{91a}, F.S. Merritt³¹, A. Messina^{131a,131b}, J. Metcalfe⁶, A.S. Mete¹⁶², C. Meyer⁸³, C. Meyer¹²¹, J.-P. Meyer¹³⁵, J. Meyer¹⁰⁶, H. Meyer Zu Theenhausen^{58a}, R.P. Middleton¹³⁰, S. Miglioranza^{163a,163c}, L. Mijović²¹, G. Mikenberg¹⁷¹, M. Mikestikova¹²⁶, M. Mikuž⁷⁵, M. Milesi⁸⁸, A. Milic³⁰, D.W. Miller³¹, C. Mills⁴⁶, A. Milov¹⁷¹, D.A. Milstead^{145a,145b}, A.A. Minaenko¹²⁹, Y. Minami¹⁵⁴, I.A. Minashvili⁶⁵, A.I. Mincer¹⁰⁹, B. Mindur^{38a}, M. Mineev⁶⁵, Y. Ming¹⁷², L.M. Mir¹², K.P. Mistry¹²¹, T. Mitani¹⁷⁰, J. Mitrevski⁹⁹, V.A. Mitsou¹⁶⁶, A. Miucci⁴⁹, P.S. Miyagawa¹³⁸, J.U. Mjörnmark⁸¹, T. Moa^{145a,145b}, K. Mochizuki⁸⁵, S. Mohapatra³⁵, W. Mohr⁴⁸, S. Molander^{145a,145b}, R. Moles-Valls²¹, R. Monden⁶⁸, M.C. Mondragon⁹⁰, K. Mönig⁴², J. Monk³⁶, E. Monnier⁸⁵, A. Montalbano¹⁴⁷, J. Montejo Berlingen³⁰, F. Monticelli⁷¹, S. Monzani^{91a,91b}, R.W. Moore³, N. Morange¹¹⁶, D. Moreno¹⁶¹, M. Moreno Llácer⁵⁴, P. Morettini^{50a}, D. Mori¹⁴¹, T. Mori¹⁵⁴, M. Morii⁵⁷, M. Morinaga¹⁵⁴, V. Morisbak¹¹⁸, S. Moritz⁸³, A.K. Morley¹⁴⁹, G. Mornacchi³⁰, J.D. Morris⁷⁶, S.S. Mortensen³⁶, L. Morvaj¹⁴⁷, M. Mosidze^{51b}, J. Moss¹⁴², K. Motohashi¹⁵⁶, R. Mount¹⁴², E. Mountricha²⁵, S.V. Mouraviev^{95,*}, E.J.W. Moyse⁸⁶, S. Muanza⁸⁵, R.D. Mudd¹⁸, F. Mueller¹⁰⁰, J. Mueller¹²⁴, R.S.P. Mueller⁹⁹, T. Mueller²⁸, D. Muenstermann⁷², P. Mullen⁵³, G.A. Mullier¹⁷, F.J. Munoz Sanchez⁸⁴, J.A. Murillo Quijada¹⁸, W.J. Murray^{169,130}, H. Musheghyan⁵⁴, A.G. Myagkov^{129,ac}, M. Myska¹²⁷, B.P. Nachman¹⁴², O. Nackenhorst⁴⁹, J. Nadal⁵⁴, K. Nagai¹¹⁹, R. Nagai^{66,w}, Y. Nagai⁸⁵, K. Nagano⁶⁶, Y. Nagasaka⁵⁹, K. Nagata¹⁵⁹, M. Nagel¹⁰⁰, E. Nagy⁸⁵, A.M. Nairz³⁰, Y. Nakahama³⁰, K. Nakamura⁶⁶, T. Nakamura¹⁵⁴, I. Nakano¹¹¹, H. Namasivayam⁴¹, R.F. Naranjo Garcia⁴², R. Narayan³¹, D.I. Narrias Villar^{58a}, I. Naryshkin¹²², T. Naumann⁴², G. Navarro¹⁶¹, R. Nayyar⁷, H.A. Neal⁸⁹, P.Yu. Nechaeva⁹⁵, T.J. Neep⁸⁴, P.D. Nef¹⁴², A. Negri^{120a,120b}, M. Negrini^{20a}, S. Nektarijevic¹⁰⁵, C. Nellist¹¹⁶, A. Nelson¹⁶², S. Nemecek¹²⁶, P. Nemethy¹⁰⁹, A.A. Nepomuceno^{24a}, M. Nessi^{30,ad}, M.S. Neubauer¹⁶⁴, M. Neumann¹⁷⁴, R.M. Neves¹⁰⁹, P. Nevski²⁵, P.R. Newman¹⁸, D.H. Nguyen⁶, R.B. Nickerson¹¹⁹, R. Nicolaïdou¹³⁵, B. Nicquevert³⁰, J. Nielsen¹³⁶, A. Nikiforov¹⁶, V. Nikolaenko^{129,ac}, I. Nikolic-Audit⁸⁰, K. Nikolopoulos¹⁸, J.K. Nilsen¹¹⁸, P. Nilsson²⁵, Y. Ninomiya¹⁵⁴, A. Nisati^{131a}, R. Nisius¹⁰⁰, T. Nobe¹⁵⁴, L. Nodulman⁶, M. Nomachi¹¹⁷, I. Nomidis²⁹, T. Nooney⁷⁶, S. Norberg¹¹², M. Nordberg³⁰, O. Novgorodova⁴⁴, S. Nowak¹⁰⁰, M. Nozaki⁶⁶, L. Nozka¹¹⁴, K. Ntekas¹⁰, E. Nurse⁷⁸, F. Nuti⁸⁸, F. O'grady⁷, D.C. O'Neil¹⁴¹, A.A. O'Rourke⁴², V. O'Shea⁵³, F.G. Oakham^{29,d}, H. Oberlack¹⁰⁰, T. Obermann²¹, J. Ocariz⁸⁰, A. Ochi⁶⁷, I. Ochoa³⁵, J.P. Ochoa-Ricoux^{32a}, S. Oda⁷⁰, S. Odaka⁶⁶, H. Ogren⁶¹, A. Oh⁸⁴, S.H. Oh⁴⁵, C.C. Ohm¹⁵, H. Ohman¹⁶⁵, H. Oide³⁰, H. Okawa¹⁵⁹, Y. Okumura³¹, T. Okuyama⁶⁶, A. Olariu^{26b}, L.F. Oleiro Seabra^{125a}, S.A. Olivares Pino⁴⁶, D. Oliveira Damazio²⁵, A. Olszewski³⁹, J. Olszowska³⁹, A. Onofre^{125a,125e}, K. Onogi¹⁰², P.U.E. Onyisi^{31,s}, C.J. Oram^{158a}, M.J. Oreglia³¹, Y. Oren¹⁵², D. Orestano^{133a,133b}, N. Orlando^{60b}, R.S. Orr¹⁵⁷, B. Osculati^{50a,50b}, R. Ospanov⁸⁴, G. Otero y Garzon²⁷, H. Otono⁷⁰, M. Ouchrif^{134d}, F. Ould-Saada¹¹⁸, A. Ouraou¹³⁵, K.P. Oussoren¹⁰⁶, Q. Ouyang^{33a}, A. Ovcharova¹⁵, M. Owen⁵³, R.E. Owen¹⁸, V.E. Ozcan^{19a}, N. Ozturk⁸, K. Pachal¹⁴¹, A. Pacheco Pages¹², C. Padilla Aranda¹², M. Pagáčová⁴⁸, S. Pagan Griso¹⁵, F. Paige²⁵, P. Pais⁸⁶, K. Pajchel¹¹⁸, G. Palacino^{158b}, S. Palestini³⁰, M. Palka^{38b}, D. Pallin³⁴, A. Palma^{125a,125b}, E.St. Panagiotopoulou¹⁰, C.E. Pandini⁸⁰, J.G. Panduro Vazquez⁷⁷, P. Pani^{145a,145b}, S. Panitkin²⁵, D. Pantea^{26b}, L. Paolozzi⁴⁹, Th.D. Papadopoulos¹⁰, K. Papageorgiou¹⁵³, A. Paramonov⁶, D. Paredes Hernandez¹⁷⁵, M.A. Parker²⁸, K.A. Parker¹³⁸, F. Parodi^{50a,50b}, J.A. Parsons³⁵, U. Parzefall⁴⁸, V. Pascuzzi¹⁵⁷, E. Pasqualucci^{131a}, S. Passaggio^{50a}, F. Pastore^{133a,133b,*}, Fr. Pastore⁷⁷, G. Pásztor²⁹, S. Patariaia¹⁷⁴, N.D. Patel¹⁴⁹, J.R. Pater⁸⁴, T. Pauly³⁰, J. Pearce¹⁶⁸, B. Pearson¹¹², L.E. Pedersen³⁶, M. Pedersen¹¹⁸, S. Pedraza Lopez¹⁶⁶, R. Pedro^{125a,125b}, S.V. Peleganchuk^{108,c}, D. Pelikan¹⁶⁵, O. Penc¹²⁶, C. Peng^{33a}, H. Peng^{33b}, J. Penwell⁶¹, B.S. Peralva^{24b}, D.V. Perepelitsa²⁵, E. Perez Codina^{158a}, L. Perini^{91a,91b}, H. Pernegger³⁰, S. Perrella^{103a,103b}, R. Peschke⁴², V.D. Peshekhonov⁶⁵, K. Peters³⁰, R.F.Y. Peters⁸⁴, B.A. Petersen³⁰, T.C. Petersen³⁶, E. Petit⁵⁵, A. Petridis¹, C. Petridou¹⁵³, P. Petroff¹¹⁶, E. Petrolo^{131a}, M. Petrov¹¹⁹, F. Petrucci^{133a,133b}, N.E. Pettersson¹⁵⁶, A. Peyaud¹³⁵, R. Pezoa^{32b}, P.W. Phillips¹³⁰, G. Piacquadio¹⁴², E. Pianori¹⁶⁹, A. Picazio⁸⁶, E. Piccaro⁷⁶, M. Piccinini^{20a,20b}, M.A. Pickering¹¹⁹, R. Piegaia²⁷, J.E. Pilcher³¹, A.D. Pilkington⁸⁴, A.W.J. Pin⁸⁴, J. Pina^{125a,125b,125d}, M. Pinamonti^{163a,163c,ae}, J.L. Pinfold³, A. Pingel³⁶, S. Pires⁸⁰, H. Pirumov⁴², M. Pitt¹⁷¹, L. Plazak^{143a}, M.-A. Pleier²⁵, V. Pleskot⁸³, E. Plotnikova⁶⁵, P. Plucinski^{145a,145b}, D. Pluth⁶⁴, R. Poettgen^{145a,145b},

L. Poggioli ¹¹⁶, D. Pohl ²¹, G. Polesello ^{120a}, A. Poley ⁴², A. Policicchio ^{37a,37b}, R. Polifka ¹⁵⁷, A. Polini ^{20a}, C.S. Pollard ⁵³, V. Polychronakos ²⁵, K. Pommès ³⁰, L. Pontecorvo ^{131a}, B.G. Pope ⁹⁰, G.A. Popeneciu ^{26c}, D.S. Popovic ¹³, A. Poppleton ³⁰, S. Pospisil ¹²⁷, K. Potamianos ¹⁵, I.N. Potrap ⁶⁵, C.J. Potter ²⁸, C.T. Potter ¹¹⁵, G. Poulard ³⁰, J. Poveda ³⁰, V. Pozdnyakov ⁶⁵, M.E. Pozo Astigarraga ³⁰, P. Pralavorio ⁸⁵, A. Pranko ¹⁵, S. Prell ⁶⁴, D. Price ⁸⁴, L.E. Price ⁶, M. Primavera ^{73a}, S. Prince ⁸⁷, M. Proissl ⁴⁶, K. Prokofiev ^{60c}, F. Prokoshin ^{32b}, S. Protopopescu ²⁵, J. Proudfoot ⁶, M. Przybycien ^{38a}, D. Puddu ^{133a,133b}, D. Puldon ¹⁴⁷, M. Purohit ^{25,af}, P. Puzo ¹¹⁶, J. Qian ⁸⁹, G. Qin ⁵³, Y. Qin ⁸⁴, A. Quadt ⁵⁴, D.R. Quarrie ¹⁵, W.B. Quayle ^{163a,163b}, M. Queitsch-Maitland ⁸⁴, D. Quilty ⁵³, S. Raddum ¹¹⁸, V. Radeka ²⁵, V. Radescu ⁴², S.K. Radhakrishnan ¹⁴⁷, P. Radloff ¹¹⁵, P. Rados ⁸⁸, F. Ragusa ^{91a,91b}, G. Rahal ¹⁷⁷, S. Rajagopalan ²⁵, M. Rammensee ³⁰, C. Rangel-Smith ¹⁶⁵, M.G. Ratti ^{91a,91b}, F. Rauscher ⁹⁹, S. Rave ⁸³, T. Ravenscroft ⁵³, M. Raymond ³⁰, A.L. Read ¹¹⁸, N.P. Readioff ⁷⁴, D.M. Rebuzzi ^{120a,120b}, A. Redelbach ¹⁷³, G. Redlinger ²⁵, R. Reece ¹³⁶, K. Reeves ⁴¹, L. Rehnisch ¹⁶, J. Reichert ¹²¹, H. Reisin ²⁷, C. Rembser ³⁰, H. Ren ^{33a}, M. Rescigno ^{131a}, S. Resconi ^{91a}, O.L. Rezanova ^{108,c}, P. Reznicek ¹²⁸, R. Rezvani ⁹⁴, R. Richter ¹⁰⁰, S. Richter ⁷⁸, E. Richter-Was ^{38b}, O. Ricken ²¹, M. Ridel ⁸⁰, P. Rieck ¹⁶, C.J. Riegel ¹⁷⁴, J. Rieger ⁵⁴, O. Rifki ¹¹², M. Rijssenbeek ¹⁴⁷, A. Rimoldi ^{120a,120b}, L. Rinaldi ^{20a}, B. Ristić ⁴⁹, E. Ritsch ³⁰, I. Riu ¹², F. Rizatdinova ¹¹³, E. Rizvi ⁷⁶, S.H. Robertson ^{87,l}, A. Robichaud-Veronneau ⁸⁷, D. Robinson ²⁸, J.E.M. Robinson ⁴², A. Robson ⁵³, C. Roda ^{123a,123b}, Y. Rodina ⁸⁵, A. Rodriguez Perez ¹², D. Rodriguez Rodriguez ¹⁶⁶, S. Roe ³⁰, C.S. Rogan ⁵⁷, O. Röhne ¹¹⁸, A. Romaniouk ⁹⁷, M. Romano ^{20a,20b}, S.M. Romano Saez ³⁴, E. Romero Adam ¹⁶⁶, N. Rompotis ¹³⁷, M. Ronzani ⁴⁸, L. Roos ⁸⁰, E. Ros ¹⁶⁶, S. Rosati ^{131a}, K. Rosbach ⁴⁸, P. Rose ¹³⁶, O. Rosenthal ¹⁴⁰, V. Rossetti ^{145a,145b}, E. Rossi ^{103a,103b}, L.P. Rossi ^{50a}, J.H.N. Rosten ²⁸, R. Rosten ¹³⁷, M. Rotaru ^{26b}, I. Roth ¹⁷¹, J. Rothberg ¹³⁷, D. Rousseau ¹¹⁶, C.R. Royon ¹³⁵, A. Rozanov ⁸⁵, Y. Rozen ¹⁵¹, X. Ruan ^{144c}, F. Rubbo ¹⁴², I. Rubinskiy ⁴², V.I. Rud ⁹⁸, M.S. Rudolph ¹⁵⁷, F. Rühr ⁴⁸, A. Ruiz-Martinez ³⁰, Z. Rurikova ⁴⁸, N.A. Rusakovich ⁶⁵, A. Ruschke ⁹⁹, H.L. Russell ¹³⁷, J.P. Rutherford ⁷, N. Ruthmann ³⁰, Y.F. Ryabov ¹²², M. Rybar ¹⁶⁴, G. Rybkin ¹¹⁶, N.C. Ryder ¹¹⁹, S. Ryu ⁶, A. Ryzhov ¹²⁹, A.F. Saavedra ¹⁴⁹, G. Sabato ¹⁰⁶, S. Sacerdoti ²⁷, H.F-W. Sadrozinski ¹³⁶, R. Sadykov ⁶⁵, F. Safai Tehrani ^{131a}, P. Saha ¹⁰⁷, M. Sahinsoy ^{58a}, M. Saimpert ¹³⁵, T. Saito ¹⁵⁴, H. Sakamoto ¹⁵⁴, Y. Sakurai ¹⁷⁰, G. Salamanna ^{133a,133b}, A. Salamon ^{132a}, J.E. Salazar Loyola ^{32b}, D. Salek ¹⁰⁶, P.H. Sales De Bruin ¹³⁷, D. Salihagic ¹⁰⁰, A. Salnikov ¹⁴², J. Salt ¹⁶⁶, D. Salvatore ^{37a,37b}, F. Salvatore ¹⁴⁸, A. Salvucci ^{60a}, A. Salzburger ³⁰, D. Sammel ⁴⁸, D. Sampsonidis ¹⁵³, A. Sanchez ^{103a,103b}, J. Sánchez ¹⁶⁶, V. Sanchez Martinez ¹⁶⁶, H. Sandaker ¹¹⁸, R.L. Sandbach ⁷⁶, H.G. Sander ⁸³, M.P. Sanders ⁹⁹, M. Sandhoff ¹⁷⁴, C. Sandoval ¹⁶¹, R. Sandstroem ¹⁰⁰, D.P.C. Sankey ¹³⁰, M. Sannino ^{50a,50b}, A. Sansoni ⁴⁷, C. Santoni ³⁴, R. Santonico ^{132a,132b}, H. Santos ^{125a}, I. Santoyo Castillo ¹⁴⁸, K. Sapp ¹²⁴, A. Saponov ⁶⁵, J.G. Saraiva ^{125a,125d}, B. Sarrazin ²¹, O. Sasaki ⁶⁶, Y. Sasaki ¹⁵⁴, K. Sato ¹⁵⁹, G. Sauvage ^{5,*}, E. Sauvan ⁵, G. Savage ⁷⁷, P. Savard ^{157,d}, C. Sawyer ¹³⁰, L. Sawyer ^{79,o}, J. Saxon ³¹, C. Sbarra ^{20a}, A. Sbrizzi ^{20a,20b}, T. Scanlon ⁷⁸, D.A. Scannicchio ¹⁶², M. Scarcella ¹⁴⁹, V. Scarfone ^{37a,37b}, J. Schaarschmidt ¹⁷¹, P. Schacht ¹⁰⁰, D. Schaefer ³⁰, R. Schaefer ⁴², J. Schaeffer ⁸³, S. Schaepe ²¹, S. Schaetzel ^{58b}, U. Schäfer ⁸³, A.C. Schaffer ¹¹⁶, D. Schaile ⁹⁹, R.D. Schamberger ¹⁴⁷, V. Scharf ^{58a}, V.A. Schegelsky ¹²², D. Scheirich ¹²⁸, M. Schernau ¹⁶², C. Schiavi ^{50a,50b}, C. Schillo ⁴⁸, M. Schioppa ^{37a,37b}, S. Schlenker ³⁰, K. Schmieden ³⁰, C. Schmitt ⁸³, S. Schmitt ⁴², S. Schmitz ⁸³, B. Schneider ^{158a}, Y.J. Schnellbach ⁷⁴, U. Schnoor ⁴⁸, L. Schoeffel ¹³⁵, A. Schoening ^{58b}, B.D. Schoenrock ⁹⁰, E. Schopf ²¹, A.L.S. Schorlemmer ⁴³, M. Schott ⁸³, D. Schouten ^{158a}, J. Schovancova ⁸, S. Schramm ⁴⁹, M. Schreyer ¹⁷³, N. Schuh ⁸³, M.J. Schultens ²¹, H.-C. Schultz-Coulon ^{58a}, H. Schulz ¹⁶, M. Schumacher ⁴⁸, B.A. Schumm ¹³⁶, Ph. Schune ¹³⁵, C. Schwanenberger ⁸⁴, A. Schwartzman ¹⁴², T.A. Schwarz ⁸⁹, Ph. Schwegler ¹⁰⁰, H. Schweiger ⁸⁴, Ph. Schwemling ¹³⁵, R. Schwienhorst ⁹⁰, J. Schwindling ¹³⁵, T. Schwindt ²¹, G. Sciolla ²³, F. Scuri ^{123a,123b}, F. Scutti ⁸⁸, J. Searcy ⁸⁹, P. Seema ²¹, S.C. Seidel ¹⁰⁴, A. Seiden ¹³⁶, F. Seifert ¹²⁷, J.M. Seixas ^{24a}, G. Sekhniaidze ^{103a}, K. Sekhon ⁸⁹, S.J. Sekula ⁴⁰, D.M. Seliverstov ^{122,*}, N. Semprini-Cesari ^{20a,20b}, C. Serfon ³⁰, L. Serin ¹¹⁶, L. Serkin ^{163a,163b}, M. Sessa ^{133a,133b}, R. Seuster ^{158a}, H. Severini ¹¹², T. Sfiligoi ⁷⁵, F. Sforza ³⁰, A. Sfyrila ⁴⁹, E. Shabalina ⁵⁴, N.W. Shaikh ^{145a,145b}, L.Y. Shan ^{33a}, R. Shang ¹⁶⁴, J.T. Shank ²², M. Shapiro ¹⁵, P.B. Shatalov ⁹⁶, K. Shaw ^{163a,163b}, S.M. Shaw ⁸⁴, A. Shcherbakova ^{145a,145b}, C.Y. Shehu ¹⁴⁸, P. Sherwood ⁷⁸, L. Shi ^{150,ag}, S. Shimizu ⁶⁷, C.O. Shimmin ¹⁶², M. Shimojima ¹⁰¹, M. Shiyakova ^{65,ah}, A. Shmeleva ⁹⁵, D. Shoaleh Saadi ⁹⁴, M.J. Shochet ³¹, S. Shojaii ^{91a,91b}, S. Shrestha ¹¹⁰, E. Shulga ⁹⁷, M.A. Shupe ⁷, P. Sicho ¹²⁶, P.E. Sidebo ¹⁴⁶, O. Sidiropoulou ¹⁷³, D. Sidorov ¹¹³, A. Sidoti ^{20a,20b}, F. Siegert ⁴⁴, Dj. Sijacki ¹³,

J. Silva ^{125a,125d}, S.B. Silverstein ^{145a}, V. Simak ¹²⁷, O. Simard ⁵, Lj. Simic ¹³, S. Simion ¹¹⁶, E. Simioni ⁸³, B. Simmons ⁷⁸, D. Simon ³⁴, M. Simon ⁸³, P. Sinervo ¹⁵⁷, N.B. Sinev ¹¹⁵, M. Sioli ^{20a,20b}, G. Siragusa ¹⁷³, S.Yu. Sivoklokov ⁹⁸, J. Sjölin ^{145a,145b}, T.B. Sjørnsen ¹⁴, M.B. Skinner ⁷², H.P. Skottowe ⁵⁷, P. Skubic ¹¹², M. Slater ¹⁸, T. Slavicek ¹²⁷, M. Slawinska ¹⁰⁶, K. Sliwa ¹⁶⁰, V. Smakhtin ¹⁷¹, B.H. Smart ⁴⁶, L. Smestad ¹⁴, S.Yu. Smirnov ⁹⁷, Y. Smirnov ⁹⁷, L.N. Smirnova ^{98,ai}, O. Smirnova ⁸¹, M.N.K. Smith ³⁵, R.W. Smith ³⁵, M. Smizanska ⁷², K. Smolek ¹²⁷, A.A. Snesarev ⁹⁵, G. Snidero ⁷⁶, S. Snyder ²⁵, R. Sobie ^{168,l}, F. Socher ⁴⁴, A. Soffer ¹⁵², D.A. Soh ^{150,ag}, G. Sokhrannyi ⁷⁵, C.A. Solans Sanchez ³⁰, M. Solar ¹²⁷, E.Yu. Soldatov ⁹⁷, U. Soldevila ¹⁶⁶, A.A. Solodkov ¹²⁹, A. Soloshenko ⁶⁵, O.V. Solovyanov ¹²⁹, V. Solovyev ¹²², P. Sommer ⁴⁸, H.Y. Song ^{33b,z}, N. Soni ¹, A. Sood ¹⁵, A. Sopczak ¹²⁷, V. Sopko ¹²⁷, V. Sorin ¹², D. Sosa ^{58b}, C.L. Sotiropoulou ^{123a,123b}, R. Soualah ^{163a,163c}, A.M. Soukharev ^{108,c}, D. South ⁴², B.C. Sowden ⁷⁷, S. Spagnolo ^{73a,73b}, M. Spalla ^{123a,123b}, M. Spangenberg ¹⁶⁹, F. Spanò ⁷⁷, D. Sperlich ¹⁶, F. Spettel ¹⁰⁰, R. Spighi ^{20a}, G. Spigo ³⁰, L.A. Spiller ⁸⁸, M. Spousta ¹²⁸, R.D. St. Denis ^{53,*}, A. Stabile ^{91a}, S. Staerz ³⁰, J. Stahlman ¹²¹, R. Stamen ^{58a}, S. Stamm ¹⁶, E. Stanecka ³⁹, R.W. Stanek ⁶, C. Stanescu ^{133a}, M. Stanescu-Bellu ⁴², M.M. Stanitzki ⁴², S. Stapnes ¹¹⁸, E.A. Starchenko ¹²⁹, G.H. Stark ³¹, J. Stark ⁵⁵, P. Staroba ¹²⁶, P. Starovoitov ^{58a}, R. Staszewski ³⁹, P. Steinberg ²⁵, B. Stelzer ¹⁴¹, H.J. Stelzer ³⁰, O. Stelzer-Chilton ^{158a}, H. Stenzel ⁵², G.A. Stewart ⁵³, J.A. Stillings ²¹, M.C. Stockton ⁸⁷, M. Stoebe ⁸⁷, G. Stoicea ^{26b}, P. Stolte ⁵⁴, S. Stonjek ¹⁰⁰, A.R. Stradling ⁸, A. Straessner ⁴⁴, M.E. Stramaglia ¹⁷, J. Strandberg ¹⁴⁶, S. Strandberg ^{145a,145b}, A. Strandlie ¹¹⁸, M. Strauss ¹¹², P. Strizenec ^{143b}, R. Ströhmer ¹⁷³, D.M. Strom ¹¹⁵, R. Stroynowski ⁴⁰, A. Strubig ¹⁰⁵, S.A. Stucci ¹⁷, B. Stugu ¹⁴, N.A. Styles ⁴², D. Su ¹⁴², J. Su ¹²⁴, R. Subramaniam ⁷⁹, S. Suchek ^{58a}, Y. Sugaya ¹¹⁷, M. Suk ¹²⁷, V.V. Sulin ⁹⁵, S. Sultansoy ^{4c}, T. Sumida ⁶⁸, S. Sun ⁵⁷, X. Sun ^{33a}, J.E. Sundermann ⁴⁸, K. Suruliz ¹⁴⁸, G. Susinno ^{37a,37b}, M.R. Sutton ¹⁴⁸, S. Suzuki ⁶⁶, M. Svatos ¹²⁶, M. Swiatlowski ³¹, I. Sykora ^{143a}, T. Sykora ¹²⁸, D. Ta ⁴⁸, C. Taccini ^{133a,133b}, K. Tackmann ⁴², J. Taenzer ¹⁵⁷, A. Taffard ¹⁶², R. Tahirout ^{158a}, N. Taiblum ¹⁵², H. Takai ²⁵, R. Takashima ⁶⁹, H. Takeda ⁶⁷, T. Takeshita ¹³⁹, Y. Takubo ⁶⁶, M. Talby ⁸⁵, A.A. Talyshev ^{108,c}, J.Y.C. Tam ¹⁷³, K.G. Tan ⁸⁸, J. Tanaka ¹⁵⁴, R. Tanaka ¹¹⁶, S. Tanaka ⁶⁶, B.B. Tannenwald ¹¹⁰, S. Tapia Araya ^{32b}, S. Tapprogge ⁸³, S. Tarem ¹⁵¹, G.F. Tartarelli ^{91a}, P. Tas ¹²⁸, M. Tasevsky ¹²⁶, T. Tashiro ⁶⁸, E. Tassi ^{37a,37b}, A. Tavares Delgado ^{125a,125b}, Y. Tayalati ^{134d}, A.C. Taylor ¹⁰⁴, G.N. Taylor ⁸⁸, P.T.E. Taylor ⁸⁸, W. Taylor ^{158b}, F.A. Teischinger ³⁰, P. Teixeira-Dias ⁷⁷, K.K. Temming ⁴⁸, D. Temple ¹⁴¹, H. Ten Kate ³⁰, P.K. Teng ¹⁵⁰, J.J. Teoh ¹¹⁷, F. Tepel ¹⁷⁴, S. Terada ⁶⁶, K. Terashi ¹⁵⁴, J. Terron ⁸², S. Terzo ¹⁰⁰, M. Testa ⁴⁷, R.J. Teuscher ^{157,l}, T. Theveneaux-Pelzer ⁸⁵, J.P. Thomas ¹⁸, J. Thomas-Wilsker ⁷⁷, E.N. Thompson ³⁵, P.D. Thompson ¹⁸, R.J. Thompson ⁸⁴, A.S. Thompson ⁵³, L.A. Thomsen ¹⁷⁵, E. Thomson ¹²¹, M. Thomson ²⁸, M.J. Tibbetts ¹⁵, R.E. Ticse Torres ⁸⁵, V.O. Tikhomirov ^{95,qj}, Yu.A. Tikhonov ^{108,c}, S. Timoshenko ⁹⁷, E. Tiouchichine ⁸⁵, P. Tipton ¹⁷⁵, S. Tisserant ⁸⁵, K. Todome ¹⁵⁶, T. Todorov ^{5,*}, S. Todorova-Nova ¹²⁸, J. Tojo ⁷⁰, S. Tokár ^{143a}, K. Tokushuku ⁶⁶, E. Tolley ⁵⁷, L. Tomlinson ⁸⁴, M. Tomoto ¹⁰², L. Tompkins ^{142,ak}, K. Toms ¹⁰⁴, B. Tong ⁵⁷, E. Torrence ¹¹⁵, H. Torres ¹⁴¹, E. Torró Pastor ¹³⁷, J. Toth ^{85,al}, F. Touchard ⁸⁵, D.R. Tovey ¹³⁸, T. Trefzger ¹⁷³, L. Tremblet ³⁰, A. Tricoli ³⁰, I.M. Trigger ^{158a}, S. Trincaz-Duviois ⁸⁰, M.F. Tripiana ¹², W. Trischuk ¹⁵⁷, B. Trocmé ⁵⁵, A. Trofymov ⁴², C. Troncon ^{91a}, M. Trottier-McDonald ¹⁵, M. Trovatelli ¹⁶⁸, L. Truong ^{163a,163b}, M. Trzebinski ³⁹, A. Trzupek ³⁹, J.C.-L. Tseng ¹¹⁹, P.V. Tsiarehsha ⁹², G. Tsipolitis ¹⁰, N. Tsirintanis ⁹, S. Tsiskaridze ¹², V. Tsiskaridze ⁴⁸, E.G. Tskhadadze ^{51a}, K.M. Tsui ^{60a}, I.I. Tsukerman ⁹⁶, V. Tsulaia ¹⁵, S. Tsuno ⁶⁶, D. Tsybychev ¹⁴⁷, A. Tudorache ^{26b}, V. Tudorache ^{26b}, A.N. Tuna ⁵⁷, S.A. Tuppiti ^{20a,20b}, S. Turchikhin ^{98,ai}, D. Turecek ¹²⁷, D. Turgeman ¹⁷¹, R. Turra ^{91a,91b}, A.J. Turvey ⁴⁰, P.M. Tuts ³⁵, M. Tylmad ^{145a,145b}, M. Tyndel ¹³⁰, I. Ueda ¹⁵⁴, R. Ueno ²⁹, M. Ughetto ^{145a,145b}, F. Ukegawa ¹⁵⁹, G. Unal ³⁰, A. Undrus ²⁵, G. Unel ¹⁶², F.C. Ungaro ⁸⁸, Y. Unno ⁶⁶, C. Unverdorben ⁹⁹, J. Urban ^{143b}, P. Urquijo ⁸⁸, P. Urrejola ⁸³, G. Usai ⁸, A. Usanova ⁶², L. Vacavant ⁸⁵, V. Vacek ¹²⁷, B. Vachon ⁸⁷, C. Valderanis ⁸³, E. Valdes Santurio ^{145a,145b}, N. Valencic ¹⁰⁶, S. Valentini ^{20a,20b}, A. Valero ¹⁶⁶, L. Valery ¹², S. Valkar ¹²⁸, S. Vallecorsa ⁴⁹, J.A. Valls Ferrer ¹⁶⁶, W. Van Den Wollenberg ¹⁰⁶, P.C. Van Der Deijl ¹⁰⁶, R. van der Geer ¹⁰⁶, H. van der Graaf ¹⁰⁶, N. van Eldik ¹⁵¹, P. van Gemmeren ⁶, J. Van Nieuwkoop ¹⁴¹, I. van Vulpen ¹⁰⁶, M.C. van Woerden ³⁰, M. Vanadia ^{131a,131b}, W. Vandelli ³⁰, R. Vanguri ¹²¹, A. Vaniachine ⁶, P. Vankov ¹⁰⁶, G. Vardanyan ¹⁷⁶, R. Vari ^{131a}, E.W. Varnes ⁷, T. Varol ⁴⁰, D. Varouchas ⁸⁰, A. Vartapetian ⁸, K.E. Varvell ¹⁴⁹, F. Vazeille ³⁴, T. Vazquez Schroeder ⁸⁷, J. Veatch ⁷, L.M. Veloce ¹⁵⁷, F. Veloso ^{125a,125c}, S. Veneziano ^{131a}, A. Ventura ^{73a,73b}, M. Venturi ¹⁶⁸, N. Venturi ¹⁵⁷, A. Venturini ²³, V. Vercesi ^{120a}, M. Verducci ^{131a,131b}, W. Verkerke ¹⁰⁶, J.C. Vermeulen ¹⁰⁶, A. Vest ^{44,am}, M.C. Vetterli ^{141,d}

O. Viazlo⁸¹, I. Vichou¹⁶⁴, T. Vickey¹³⁸, O.E. Vickey Boeriu¹³⁸, G.H.A. Viehhauser¹¹⁹, S. Viel¹⁵, R. Vigne⁶², M. Villa^{20a,20b}, M. Villaplana Perez^{91a,91b}, E. Vilucchi⁴⁷, M.G. Vinciter²⁹, V.B. Vinogradov⁶⁵, I. Vivarelli¹⁴⁸, S. Vlachos¹⁰, M. Vlasak¹²⁷, M. Vogel¹⁷⁴, P. Vokac¹²⁷, G. Volpi^{123a,123b}, M. Volpi⁸⁸, H. von der Schmitt¹⁰⁰, E. von Toerne²¹, V. Vorobel¹²⁸, K. Vorobev⁹⁷, M. Vos¹⁶⁶, R. Voss³⁰, J.H. Vosseveld⁷⁴, N. Vranjes¹³, M. Vranjes Milosavljevic¹³, V. Vrba¹²⁶, M. Vreeswijk¹⁰⁶, R. Vuillermet³⁰, I. Vukotic³¹, Z. Vykydal¹²⁷, P. Wagner²¹, W. Wagner¹⁷⁴, H. Wahlberg⁷¹, S. Wahrmund⁴⁴, J. Wakabayashi¹⁰², J. Walder⁷², R. Walker⁹⁹, W. Walkowiak¹⁴⁰, V. Wallangen^{145a,145b}, C. Wang¹⁵⁰, C. Wang^{33d,85}, F. Wang¹⁷², H. Wang¹⁵, H. Wang⁴⁰, J. Wang⁴², J. Wang¹⁴⁹, K. Wang⁸⁷, R. Wang⁶, S.M. Wang¹⁵⁰, T. Wang²¹, T. Wang³⁵, X. Wang¹⁷⁵, C. Wanotayaroj¹¹⁵, A. Warburton⁸⁷, C.P. Ward²⁸, D.R. Wardrope⁷⁸, A. Washbrook⁴⁶, P.M. Watkins¹⁸, A.T. Watson¹⁸, I.J. Watson¹⁴⁹, M.F. Watson¹⁸, G. Watts¹³⁷, S. Watts⁸⁴, B.M. Waugh⁷⁸, S. Webb⁸³, M.S. Weber¹⁷, S.W. Weber¹⁷³, J.S. Webster⁶, A.R. Weidberg¹¹⁹, B. Weinert⁶¹, J. Weingarten⁵⁴, C. Weiser⁴⁸, H. Weits¹⁰⁶, P.S. Wells³⁰, T. Wenaus²⁵, T. Wengler³⁰, S. Wenig³⁰, N. Wermes²¹, M. Werner⁴⁸, P. Werner³⁰, M. Wessels^{58a}, J. Wetter¹⁶⁰, K. Whalen¹¹⁵, A.M. Wharton⁷², A. White⁸, M.J. White¹, R. White^{32b}, S. White^{123a,123b}, D. Whiteson¹⁶², F.J. Wickens¹³⁰, W. Wiedenmann¹⁷², M. Wielers¹³⁰, P. Wienemann²¹, C. Wiglesworth³⁶, L.A.M. Wiik-Fuchs²¹, A. Wildauer¹⁰⁰, H.G. Wilkens³⁰, H.H. Williams¹²¹, S. Williams¹⁰⁶, C. Willis⁹⁰, S. Willocq⁸⁶, J.A. Wilson¹⁸, I. Wingerter-Seez⁵, F. Winklmeier¹¹⁵, B.T. Winter²¹, M. Wittgen¹⁴², J. Wittkowski⁹⁹, S.J. Wollstadt⁸³, M.W. Wolter³⁹, H. Wolters^{125a,125c}, B.K. Wosiek³⁹, J. Wotschack³⁰, M.J. Woudstra⁸⁴, K.W. Wozniak³⁹, M. Wu⁵⁵, M. Wu³¹, S.L. Wu¹⁷², X. Wu⁴⁹, Y. Wu⁸⁹, T.R. Wyatt⁸⁴, B.M. Wynne⁴⁶, S. Xella³⁶, D. Xu^{33a}, L. Xu²⁵, B. Yabsley¹⁴⁹, S. Yacoob^{144a}, R. Yakabe⁶⁷, D. Yamaguchi¹⁵⁶, Y. Yamaguchi¹¹⁷, A. Yamamoto⁶⁶, S. Yamamoto¹⁵⁴, T. Yamanaka¹⁵⁴, K. Yamauchi¹⁰², Y. Yamazaki⁶⁷, Z. Yan²², H. Yang^{33e}, H. Yang¹⁷², Y. Yang¹⁵⁰, Z. Yang¹⁴, W.-M. Yao¹⁵, Y.C. Yap⁸⁰, Y. Yasu⁶⁶, E. Yatsenko⁵, K.H. Yau Wong²¹, J. Ye⁴⁰, S. Ye²⁵, I. Yeletsikh⁶⁵, A.L. Yen⁵⁷, E. Yildirim⁴², K. Yorita¹⁷⁰, R. Yoshida⁶, K. Yoshihara¹²¹, C. Young¹⁴², C.J.S. Young³⁰, S. Youssef²², D.R. Yu¹⁵, J. Yu⁸, J.M. Yu⁸⁹, J. Yu⁶⁴, L. Yuan⁶⁷, S.P.Y. Yuen²¹, I. Yusuf^{28,an}, B. Zabinski³⁹, R. Zaidan^{33d}, A.M. Zaitsev^{129,ac}, N. Zakharchuk⁴², J. Zalieckas¹⁴, A. Zaman¹⁴⁷, S. Zambito⁵⁷, L. Zanello^{131a,131b}, D. Zanzi⁸⁸, C. Zeitnitz¹⁷⁴, M. Zeman¹²⁷, A. Zemla^{38a}, J.C. Zeng¹⁶⁴, Q. Zeng¹⁴², K. Zengel²³, O. Zenin¹²⁹, T. Ženiš^{143a}, D. Zerwas¹¹⁶, D. Zhang⁸⁹, F. Zhang¹⁷², G. Zhang^{33b,z}, H. Zhang^{33c}, J. Zhang⁶, L. Zhang⁴⁸, R. Zhang²¹, R. Zhang^{33b,ao}, X. Zhang^{33d}, Z. Zhang¹¹⁶, X. Zhao⁴⁰, Y. Zhao^{33d,116}, Z. Zhao^{33b}, A. Zhemchugov⁶⁵, J. Zhong¹¹⁹, B. Zhou⁸⁹, C. Zhou⁴⁵, L. Zhou³⁵, L. Zhou⁴⁰, M. Zhou¹⁴⁷, N. Zhou^{33f}, C.G. Zhu^{33d}, H. Zhu^{33a}, J. Zhu⁸⁹, Y. Zhu^{33b}, X. Zhuang^{33a}, K. Zhukov⁹⁵, A. Zibell¹⁷³, D. Zieminska⁶¹, N.I. Zimine⁶⁵, C. Zimmermann⁸³, S. Zimmermann⁴⁸, Z. Zinonos⁵⁴, M. Zinser⁸³, M. Ziolkowski¹⁴⁰, L. Živković¹³, G. Zobernig¹⁷², A. Zoccoli^{20a,20b}, M. zur Nedden¹⁶, G. Zurzolo^{103a,103b}, L. Zwalinski³⁰

¹ Department of Physics, University of Adelaide, Adelaide, Australia

² Physics Department, SUNY Albany, Albany, NY, United States

³ Department of Physics, University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB, Canada

⁴ (a) Department of Physics, Ankara University, Ankara; (b) Istanbul Aydin University, Istanbul; (c) Division of Physics, TOBB University of Economics and Technology, Ankara, Turkey

⁵ LAPP, CNRS/IN2P3 and Université Savoie Mont Blanc, Annecy-le-Vieux, France

⁶ High Energy Physics Division, Argonne National Laboratory, Argonne, IL, United States

⁷ Department of Physics, University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ, United States

⁸ Department of Physics, The University of Texas at Arlington, Arlington, TX, United States

⁹ Physics Department, University of Athens, Athens, Greece

¹⁰ Physics Department, National Technical University of Athens, Zografou, Greece

¹¹ Institute of Physics, Azerbaijan Academy of Sciences, Baku, Azerbaijan

¹² Institut de Física d'Altes Energies (IFAE), The Barcelona Institute of Science and Technology, Barcelona, Spain

¹³ Institute of Physics, University of Belgrade, Belgrade, Serbia

¹⁴ Department for Physics and Technology, University of Bergen, Bergen, Norway

¹⁵ Physics Division, Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory and University of California, Berkeley, CA, United States

¹⁶ Department of Physics, Humboldt University, Berlin, Germany

¹⁷ Albert Einstein Center for Fundamental Physics and Laboratory for High Energy Physics, University of Bern, Bern, Switzerland

¹⁸ School of Physics and Astronomy, University of Birmingham, Birmingham, United Kingdom

¹⁹ (a) Department of Physics, Bogazici University, Istanbul; (b) Department of Physics Engineering, Gaziantep University, Gaziantep; (c) Istanbul Bilgi University, Faculty of Engineering and Natural Sciences, Istanbul, Turkey; (d) Bahcesehir University, Faculty of Engineering and Natural Sciences, Istanbul, Turkey

²⁰ (a) INFN Sezione di Bologna; (b) Dipartimento di Fisica e Astronomia, Università di Bologna, Bologna, Italy

²¹ Physikalisches Institut, University of Bonn, Bonn, Germany

²² Department of Physics, Boston University, Boston, MA, United States

²³ Department of Physics, Brandeis University, Waltham, MA, United States

²⁴ (a) Universidade Federal do Rio De Janeiro COPPE/EE/IF, Rio de Janeiro; (b) Electrical Circuits Department, Federal University of Juiz de Fora (UFJF), Juiz de Fora; (c) Federal University of Sao Joao del Rei (UFSJ), Sao Joao del Rei; (d) Instituto de Física, Universidade de Sao Paulo, Sao Paulo, Brazil

²⁵ Physics Department, Brookhaven National Laboratory, Upton, NY, United States

- ²⁶ (a) Transilvania University of Brasov, Brasov, Romania; (b) National Institute of Physics and Nuclear Engineering, Bucharest; (c) National Institute for Research and Development of Isotopic and Molecular Technologies, Physics Department, Cluj Napoca; (d) University Politehnica Bucharest, Bucharest; (e) West University in Timisoara, Timisoara, Romania
- ²⁷ Departamento de Física, Universidad de Buenos Aires, Buenos Aires, Argentina
- ²⁸ Cavendish Laboratory, University of Cambridge, Cambridge, United Kingdom
- ²⁹ Department of Physics, Carleton University, Ottawa, ON, Canada
- ³⁰ CERN, Geneva, Switzerland
- ³¹ Enrico Fermi Institute, University of Chicago, Chicago, IL, United States
- ³² (a) Departamento de Física, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, Santiago; (b) Departamento de Física, Universidad Técnica Federico Santa María, Valparaíso, Chile
- ³³ (a) Institute of High Energy Physics, Chinese Academy of Sciences, Beijing; (b) Department of Modern Physics, University of Science and Technology of China, Anhui; (c) Department of Physics, Nanjing University, Jiangsu; (d) School of Physics, Shandong University, Shandong; (e) Department of Physics and Astronomy, Shanghai Key Laboratory for Particle Physics and Cosmology, Shanghai Jiao Tong University, Shanghai; (also affiliated with PKU-CHEP); (f) Physics Department, Tsinghua University, Beijing 100084, China
- ³⁴ Laboratoire de Physique Corpusculaire, Clermont Université Blaise Pascal and CNRS/IN2P3, Clermont-Ferrand, France
- ³⁵ Nevis Laboratory, Columbia University, Irvington, NY, United States
- ³⁶ Niels Bohr Institute, University of Copenhagen, Copenhagen, Denmark
- ³⁷ (a) INFN Gruppo Collegato di Cosenza, Laboratori Nazionali di Frascati; (b) Dipartimento di Fisica, Università della Calabria, Rende, Italy
- ³⁸ (a) AGH University of Science and Technology, Faculty of Physics and Applied Computer Science, Krakow; (b) Marian Smoluchowski Institute of Physics, Jagiellonian University, Krakow, Poland
- ³⁹ Institute of Nuclear Physics Polish Academy of Sciences, Krakow, Poland
- ⁴⁰ Physics Department, Southern Methodist University, Dallas, TX, United States
- ⁴¹ Physics Department, University of Texas at Dallas, Richardson, TX, United States
- ⁴² DESY, Hamburg and Zeuthen, Germany
- ⁴³ Institut für Experimentelle Physik IV, Technische Universität Dortmund, Dortmund, Germany
- ⁴⁴ Institut für Kern- und Teilchenphysik, Technische Universität Dresden, Dresden, Germany
- ⁴⁵ Department of Physics, Duke University, Durham, NC, United States
- ⁴⁶ SUPA – School of Physics and Astronomy, University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh, United Kingdom
- ⁴⁷ INFN Laboratori Nazionali di Frascati, Frascati, Italy
- ⁴⁸ Fakultät für Mathematik und Physik, Albert-Ludwigs-Universität, Freiburg, Germany
- ⁴⁹ Section de Physique, Université de Genève, Geneva, Switzerland
- ⁵⁰ (a) INFN Sezione di Genova; (b) Dipartimento di Fisica, Università di Genova, Genova, Italy
- ⁵¹ (a) E. Andronikashvili Institute of Physics, Iv. Javakishvili Tbilisi State University, Tbilisi; (b) High Energy Physics Institute, Tbilisi State University, Tbilisi, Georgia
- ⁵² II Physikalisches Institut, Justus-Liebig-Universität Giessen, Giessen, Germany
- ⁵³ SUPA – School of Physics and Astronomy, University of Glasgow, Glasgow, United Kingdom
- ⁵⁴ II Physikalisches Institut, Georg-August-Universität, Göttingen, Germany
- ⁵⁵ Laboratoire de Physique Subatomique et de Cosmologie, Université Grenoble-Alpes, CNRS/IN2P3, Grenoble, France
- ⁵⁶ Department of Physics, Hampton University, Hampton, VA, United States
- ⁵⁷ Laboratory for Particle Physics and Cosmology, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, United States
- ⁵⁸ (a) Kirchhoff-Institut für Physik, Ruprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg, Heidelberg; (b) Physikalisches Institut, Ruprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg, Heidelberg; (c) ZITI Institut für technische Informatik, Ruprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg, Mannheim, Germany
- ⁵⁹ Faculty of Applied Information Science, Hiroshima Institute of Technology, Hiroshima, Japan
- ⁶⁰ (a) Department of Physics, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Shatin, N.T., Hong Kong; (b) Department of Physics, The University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong; (c) Department of Physics, The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, Clear Water Bay, Kowloon, Hong Kong, China
- ⁶¹ Department of Physics, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN, United States
- ⁶² Institut für Astro- und Teilchenphysik, Leopold-Franzens-Universität, Innsbruck, Austria
- ⁶³ University of Iowa, Iowa City, IA, United States
- ⁶⁴ Department of Physics and Astronomy, Iowa State University, Ames, IA, United States
- ⁶⁵ Joint Institute for Nuclear Research, JINR Dubna, Dubna, Russia
- ⁶⁶ KEK, High Energy Accelerator Research Organization, Tsukuba, Japan
- ⁶⁷ Graduate School of Science, Kobe University, Kobe, Japan
- ⁶⁸ Faculty of Science, Kyoto University, Kyoto, Japan
- ⁶⁹ Kyoto University of Education, Kyoto, Japan
- ⁷⁰ Department of Physics, Kyushu University, Fukuoka, Japan
- ⁷¹ Instituto de Física La Plata, Universidad Nacional de La Plata and CONICET, La Plata, Argentina
- ⁷² Physics Department, Lancaster University, Lancaster, United Kingdom
- ⁷³ (a) INFN Sezione di Lecce; (b) Dipartimento di Matematica e Fisica, Università del Salento, Lecce, Italy
- ⁷⁴ Oliver Lodge Laboratory, University of Liverpool, Liverpool, United Kingdom
- ⁷⁵ Department of Physics, Jožef Stefan Institute and University of Ljubljana, Ljubljana, Slovenia
- ⁷⁶ School of Physics and Astronomy, Queen Mary University of London, London, United Kingdom
- ⁷⁷ Department of Physics, Royal Holloway University of London, Surrey, United Kingdom
- ⁷⁸ Department of Physics and Astronomy, University College London, London, United Kingdom
- ⁷⁹ Louisiana Tech University, Ruston, LA, United States
- ⁸⁰ Laboratoire de Physique Nucléaire et de Hautes Energies, UPMC and Université Paris-Diderot and CNRS/IN2P3, Paris, France
- ⁸¹ Fysiska institutionen, Lunds universitet, Lund, Sweden
- ⁸² Departamento de Física Teórica C-15, Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, Madrid, Spain
- ⁸³ Institut für Physik, Universität Mainz, Mainz, Germany
- ⁸⁴ School of Physics and Astronomy, University of Manchester, Manchester, United Kingdom
- ⁸⁵ CPPM, Aix-Marseille Université and CNRS/IN2P3, Marseille, France
- ⁸⁶ Department of Physics, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA, United States
- ⁸⁷ Department of Physics, McGill University, Montreal, QC, Canada
- ⁸⁸ School of Physics, University of Melbourne, Victoria, Australia
- ⁸⁹ Department of Physics, The University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, United States
- ⁹⁰ Department of Physics and Astronomy, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI, United States
- ⁹¹ (a) INFN Sezione di Milano; (b) Dipartimento di Fisica, Università di Milano, Milano, Italy
- ⁹² B.I. Stepanov Institute of Physics, National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, Minsk, Belarus
- ⁹³ National Scientific and Educational Centre for Particle and High Energy Physics, Minsk, Belarus
- ⁹⁴ Group of Particle Physics, University of Montreal, Montreal, QC, Canada
- ⁹⁵ P.N. Lebedev Physical Institute of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow, Russia
- ⁹⁶ Institute for Theoretical and Experimental Physics (ITEP), Moscow, Russia
- ⁹⁷ National Research Nuclear University MEPhI, Moscow, Russia
- ⁹⁸ D.V. Skobeltsyn Institute of Nuclear Physics, M.V. Lomonosov Moscow State University, Moscow, Russia

- ⁹⁹ Fakultät für Physik, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München, München, Germany
- ¹⁰⁰ Max-Planck-Institut für Physik (Werner-Heisenberg-Institut), München, Germany
- ¹⁰¹ Nagasaki Institute of Applied Science, Nagasaki, Japan
- ¹⁰² Graduate School of Science and Kobayashi–Maskawa Institute, Nagoya University, Nagoya, Japan
- ¹⁰³ ^(a) INFN Sezione di Napoli; ^(b) Dipartimento di Fisica, Università di Napoli, Napoli, Italy
- ¹⁰⁴ Department of Physics and Astronomy, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM, United States
- ¹⁰⁵ Institute for Mathematics, Astrophysics and Particle Physics, Radboud University Nijmegen/Nikhef, Nijmegen, Netherlands
- ¹⁰⁶ Nikhef National Institute for Subatomic Physics and University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam, Netherlands
- ¹⁰⁷ Department of Physics, Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, IL, United States
- ¹⁰⁸ Budker Institute of Nuclear Physics, SB RAS, Novosibirsk, Russia
- ¹⁰⁹ Department of Physics, New York University, New York, NY, United States
- ¹¹⁰ Ohio State University, Columbus, OH, United States
- ¹¹¹ Faculty of Science, Okayama University, Okayama, Japan
- ¹¹² Homer L. Dodge Department of Physics and Astronomy, University of Oklahoma, Norman, OK, United States
- ¹¹³ Department of Physics, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK, United States
- ¹¹⁴ Palacký University, RPTM, Olomouc, Czech Republic
- ¹¹⁵ Center for High Energy Physics, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR, United States
- ¹¹⁶ LAL, Univ. Paris-Sud, CNRS/IN2P3, Université Paris-Saclay, Orsay, France
- ¹¹⁷ Graduate School of Science, Osaka University, Osaka, Japan
- ¹¹⁸ Department of Physics, University of Oslo, Oslo, Norway
- ¹¹⁹ Department of Physics, Oxford University, Oxford, United Kingdom
- ¹²⁰ ^(a) INFN Sezione di Pavia; ^(b) Dipartimento di Fisica, Università di Pavia, Pavia, Italy
- ¹²¹ Department of Physics, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA, United States
- ¹²² National Research Centre “Kurchatov Institute”, B.P. Konstantinov Petersburg Nuclear Physics Institute, St. Petersburg, Russia
- ¹²³ ^(a) INFN Sezione di Pisa; ^(b) Dipartimento di Fisica E. Fermi, Università di Pisa, Pisa, Italy
- ¹²⁴ Department of Physics and Astronomy, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA, United States
- ¹²⁵ ^(a) Laboratório de Instrumentação e Física Experimental de Partículas – LIP, Lisboa; ^(b) Faculdade de Ciências, Universidade de Lisboa, Lisboa; ^(c) Department of Physics, University of Coimbra, Coimbra; ^(d) Centro de Física Nuclear da Universidade de Lisboa, Lisboa; ^(e) Departamento de Física, Universidade do Minho, Braga; ^(f) Departamento de Física Teórica y del Cosmos and CAFPE, Universidad de Granada, Granada (Spain); ^(g) Dep Física and CEFITEC of Faculdade de Ciências e Tecnologia, Universidade Nova de Lisboa, Caparica, Portugal
- ¹²⁶ Institute of Physics, Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, Praha, Czech Republic
- ¹²⁷ Czech Technical University in Prague, Praha, Czech Republic
- ¹²⁸ Faculty of Mathematics and Physics, Charles University in Prague, Praha, Czech Republic
- ¹²⁹ State Research Center Institute for High Energy Physics (Protvino), NRC KI, Russia
- ¹³⁰ Particle Physics Department, Rutherford Appleton Laboratory, Didcot, United Kingdom
- ¹³¹ ^(a) INFN Sezione di Roma; ^(b) Dipartimento di Fisica, Sapienza Università di Roma, Roma, Italy
- ¹³² ^(a) INFN Sezione di Roma Tor Vergata; ^(b) Dipartimento di Fisica, Università di Roma Tor Vergata, Roma, Italy
- ¹³³ ^(a) INFN Sezione di Roma Tre; ^(b) Dipartimento di Matematica e Fisica, Università Roma Tre, Roma, Italy
- ¹³⁴ ^(a) Faculté des Sciences Ain Chock, Réseau Universitaire de Physique des Hautes Energies – Université Hassan II, Casablanca; ^(b) Centre National de l’Energie des Sciences Techniques Nucleaires, Rabat; ^(c) Faculté des Sciences Semlalia, Université Cadi Ayyad, LPHEA, Marrakech; ^(d) Faculté des Sciences, Université Mohamed Premier and LPTPM, Oujda; ^(e) Faculté des sciences, Université Mohammed V, Rabat, Morocco
- ¹³⁵ DSM/IRFU (Institut de Recherches sur les Lois Fondamentales de l’Univers), CEA Saclay (Commissariat à l’Energie Atomique et aux Energies Alternatives), Gif-sur-Yvette, France
- ¹³⁶ Santa Cruz Institute for Particle Physics, University of California Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz, CA, United States
- ¹³⁷ Department of Physics, University of Washington, Seattle, WA, United States
- ¹³⁸ Department of Physics and Astronomy, University of Sheffield, Sheffield, United Kingdom
- ¹³⁹ Department of Physics, Shinshu University, Nagano, Japan
- ¹⁴⁰ Fachbereich Physik, Universität Siegen, Siegen, Germany
- ¹⁴¹ Department of Physics, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, BC, Canada
- ¹⁴² SLAC National Accelerator Laboratory, Stanford, CA, United States
- ¹⁴³ ^(a) Faculty of Mathematics, Physics & Informatics, Comenius University, Bratislava; ^(b) Department of Subnuclear Physics, Institute of Experimental Physics of the Slovak Academy of Sciences, Kosice, Slovak Republic
- ¹⁴⁴ ^(a) Department of Physics, University of Cape Town, Cape Town; ^(b) Department of Physics, University of Johannesburg, Johannesburg; ^(c) School of Physics, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa
- ¹⁴⁵ ^(a) Department of Physics, Stockholm University; ^(b) The Oskar Klein Centre, Stockholm, Sweden
- ¹⁴⁶ Physics Department, Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm, Sweden
- ¹⁴⁷ Departments of Physics & Astronomy and Chemistry, Stony Brook University, Stony Brook, NY, United States
- ¹⁴⁸ Department of Physics and Astronomy, University of Sussex, Brighton, United Kingdom
- ¹⁴⁹ School of Physics, University of Sydney, Sydney, Australia
- ¹⁵⁰ Institute of Physics, Academia Sinica, Taipei, Taiwan
- ¹⁵¹ Department of Physics, Technion: Israel Institute of Technology, Haifa, Israel
- ¹⁵² Raymond and Beverly Sackler School of Physics and Astronomy, Tel Aviv University, Tel Aviv, Israel
- ¹⁵³ Department of Physics, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Thessaloniki, Greece
- ¹⁵⁴ International Center for Elementary Particle Physics and Department of Physics, The University of Tokyo, Tokyo, Japan
- ¹⁵⁵ Graduate School of Science and Technology, Tokyo Metropolitan University, Tokyo, Japan
- ¹⁵⁶ Department of Physics, Tokyo Institute of Technology, Tokyo, Japan
- ¹⁵⁷ Department of Physics, University of Toronto, Toronto, ON, Canada
- ¹⁵⁸ ^(a) TRIUMF, Vancouver, BC; ^(b) Department of Physics and Astronomy, York University, Toronto, ON, Canada
- ¹⁵⁹ Faculty of Pure and Applied Sciences, and Center for Integrated Research in Fundamental Science and Engineering, University of Tsukuba, Tsukuba, Japan
- ¹⁶⁰ Department of Physics and Astronomy, Tufts University, Medford, MA, United States
- ¹⁶¹ Centro de Investigaciones, Universidad Antonio Narino, Bogota, Colombia
- ¹⁶² Department of Physics and Astronomy, University of California Irvine, Irvine, CA, United States
- ¹⁶³ ^(a) INFN Gruppo Collegato di Udine, Sezione di Trieste, Udine; ^(b) ICTP, Trieste; ^(c) Dipartimento di Chimica, Fisica e Ambiente, Università di Udine, Udine, Italy
- ¹⁶⁴ Department of Physics, University of Illinois, Urbana, IL, United States
- ¹⁶⁵ Department of Physics and Astronomy, University of Uppsala, Uppsala, Sweden
- ¹⁶⁶ Instituto de Física Corpuscular (IFIC) and Departamento de Física Atómica, Molecular y Nuclear and Departamento de Ingeniería Electrónica and Instituto de Microelectrónica de Barcelona (IMB-CNM), University of Valencia and CSIC, Valencia, Spain
- ¹⁶⁷ Department of Physics, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC, Canada
- ¹⁶⁸ Department of Physics and Astronomy, University of Victoria, Victoria, BC, Canada
- ¹⁶⁹ Department of Physics, University of Warwick, Coventry, United Kingdom
- ¹⁷⁰ Waseda University, Tokyo, Japan

- ¹⁷¹ *Department of Particle Physics, The Weizmann Institute of Science, Rehovot, Israel*
¹⁷² *Department of Physics, University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI, United States*
¹⁷³ *Fakultät für Physik und Astronomie, Julius-Maximilians-Universität, Würzburg, Germany*
¹⁷⁴ *Fakultät für Mathematik und Naturwissenschaften, Fachgruppe Physik, Bergische Universität Wuppertal, Wuppertal, Germany*
¹⁷⁵ *Department of Physics, Yale University, New Haven, CT, United States*
¹⁷⁶ *Yerevan Physics Institute, Yerevan, Armenia*
¹⁷⁷ *Centre de Calcul de l'Institut National de Physique Nucléaire et de Physique des Particules (IN2P3), Villeurbanne, France*

- ^a Also at Department of Physics, King's College London, London, United Kingdom.
^b Also at Institute of Physics, Azerbaijan Academy of Sciences, Baku, Azerbaijan.
^c Also at Novosibirsk State University, Novosibirsk, Russia.
^d Also at TRIUMF, Vancouver, BC, Canada.
^e Also at Department of Physics & Astronomy, University of Louisville, Louisville, KY, United States.
^f Also at Department of Physics, California State University, Fresno, CA, United States.
^g Also at Department of Physics, University of Fribourg, Fribourg, Switzerland.
^h Also at Departament de Física de la Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Barcelona, Spain.
ⁱ Also at Departamento de Física e Astronomia, Faculdade de Ciências, Universidade do Porto, Portugal.
^j Also at Tomsk State University, Tomsk, Russia.
^k Also at Università di Napoli Parthenope, Napoli, Italy.
^l Also at Institute of Particle Physics (IPP), Canada.
^m Also at Department of Physics, St. Petersburg State Polytechnical University, St. Petersburg, Russia.
ⁿ Also at Department of Physics, The University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, United States.
^o Also at Louisiana Tech University, Ruston, LA, United States.
^p Also at Institució Catalana de Recerca i Estudis Avançats, ICREA, Barcelona, Spain.
^q Also at Graduate School of Science, Osaka University, Osaka, Japan.
^r Also at Department of Physics, National Tsing Hua University, Taiwan.
^s Also at Department of Physics, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, TX, United States.
^t Also at Institute of Theoretical Physics, Ilia State University, Tbilisi, Georgia.
^u Also at CERN, Geneva, Switzerland.
^v Also at Georgian Technical University (GTU), Tbilisi, Georgia.
^w Also at Ochanomizu Academic Production, Ochanomizu University, Tokyo, Japan.
^x Also at Manhattan College, New York, NY, United States.
^y Also at Hellenic Open University, Patras, Greece.
^z Also at Institute of Physics, Academia Sinica, Taipei, Taiwan.
^{aa} Also at Academia Sinica Grid Computing, Institute of Physics, Academia Sinica, Taipei, Taiwan.
^{ab} Also at School of Physics, Shandong University, Shandong, China.
^{ac} Also at Moscow Institute of Physics and Technology State University, Dolgoprudny, Russia.
^{ad} Also at Section de Physique, Université de Genève, Geneva, Switzerland.
^{ae} Also at International School for Advanced Studies (SISSA), Trieste, Italy.
^{af} Also at Department of Physics and Astronomy, University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC, United States.
^{ag} Also at School of Physics and Engineering, Sun Yat-sen University, Guangzhou, China.
^{ah} Also at Institute for Nuclear Research and Nuclear Energy (INRNE) of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Sofia, Bulgaria.
^{ai} Also at Faculty of Physics, M.V. Lomonosov Moscow State University, Moscow, Russia.
^{aj} Also at National Research Nuclear University MEPhI, Moscow, Russia.
^{ak} Also at Department of Physics, Stanford University, Stanford, CA, United States.
^{al} Also at Institute for Particle and Nuclear Physics, Wigner Research Centre for Physics, Budapest, Hungary.
^{am} Also at Flensburg University of Applied Sciences, Flensburg, Germany.
^{an} Also at University of Malaya, Department of Physics, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.
^{ao} Also at CPPM, Aix-Marseille Université and CNRS/IN2P3, Marseille, France.
^{*} Deceased.